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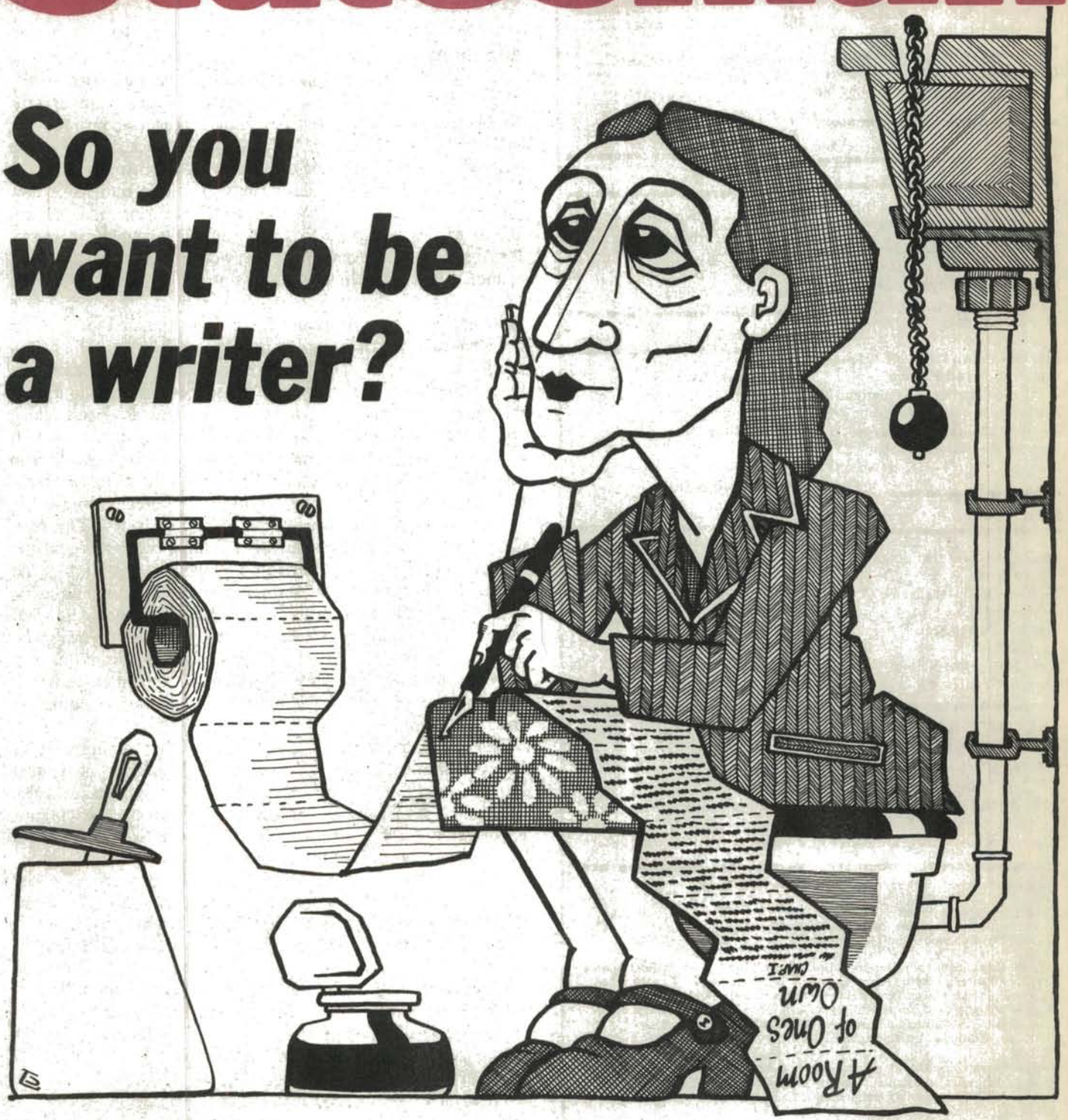

BRIAN SEDGEMORE: Cowards in the Commons
CHARLES RAW: Covering up City scandals
COLM TOIBIN: Meeting Argentina's torturers

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New Statesman

Vol 110 No 2836 26 July 1985

Myths of being British

AS FAR AS this government is concerned, black immigration is an evil wholly to be deplored. While it offers constitutionally correct statements on the obligations it must honour, the government also speaks in a revealing language about reducing black immigration to a 'trickle' for fear of the black aliens who will otherwise 'swamp' some pristine entity called British culture.

This week in the House of Commons it introduced a new immigration rule that made a small check on constitutional sexism and took a larger step towards constitutional xenophobic racism. It plans to make it illegal for foreign women married or affianced to men settled in Britain to enter this country unless they can prove that the 'primary purpose' of their marriage was marriage rather than entry into Britain. It has also stipulated for the first time that such married partners must prove that they will not be a burden to the State. Such strictures on marriage are a nonsense. On the one hand, the 'primary purpose' rule attempts to draw a distinction between marriage as a contract for love and sex — which immigration officers will accept — and marriage as an economic arrangement — which they won't accept. Yet it also attaches economic criteria (ie not being a burden) to marriages between a person settled here and his or her foreign spouse.

This week 309 MPs voted for these new rules. The only Conservative opposition came from those who thought the 'trickle' should have been dried up altogether. Yet not only do Conservatives not believe that marriage is only for love and sex; it is anyway deeply offensive and quite impossible to prove for what essential reason any two people do get married. If all the MPs who voted for the new rule had to submit their marriages to this test, there would be a good many failures, and a good many dubious cases to be sent to the back of the queue for endless examination and re-examination.

The government was trapped between its commitment to Europe and thus, grudgingly, to the European Court of Human Rights which ruled last May that the immigration rules constituted sexual discrimination, and its own backbench hard Right. Home Secretary Leon Brittan chose to appease those backbenchers with a racist measure.

This is taking constituional racism to dangerous levels. Increasingly tight restrictions on black immigration have not increased employment for white people. They have not lessened levels of racial discrimination. They have not lowered the number and intensity of attacks on black people living here. Quite the reverse; all three measures of the impact of black immigration, from the Caribbean and Asian sub-continent, confidently used by both Labour and Conservative MPs in the 1970s to argue for tighter controls on black immigration, have got significantly worse in the last ten years.

There is in fact a strong argument that the government's method of immigration control, including the invention of the notorious concept of 'patriality', itself intensifies the practice of racism which in theory it is meant to reduce. This is not because immigration law as such is wrong; a State has the right to exercise some measure of control over who enters a country and it is better that it is decided by law than by immigration officers. But our immigration rules in both law and practice are profoundly racist.

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In devising them, the government itself actively cultivates the notion of the black population as, at best, a 'problem' demanding 'tolerance' of the white population. At worst — and Conservative views on immigration are generally at worst — the government actively promotes the myth of the wholly alien black stranger at the gate who, if allowed in, will undermine the essential racial character of Britain. Each time the government draws on this myth, each time it strengthens the specifically racial dimension of immigration law, it moves nearer towards creating an ideology of 'racial purity' as an essential quality of being British.

It is time critics of the government's policy moved beyond arguments about fairness and tolerance and began to attack the myth itself. For the notion of the racial homogeneity of Britain, a homogeneity shared by rulers and ruled alike, is a very modern construction. Never in the last 1000 years have the rulers and ruled of this island, and its varying overseas territories, shared a single racial origin. The sudden rewriting of history to assert that they have is, in large part, a response to the end of empire, an image of a newly weakened State under attack from the revengeful black masses whom it once commanded.

If political leaders began to welcome the value of black immigration, a mingling of races which owes far more to British 'tradition' than any racial purity, rather than speaking of it as a problem, there would be less need to appease either the European Court or the backbench Right. □

When law is disorder

AROUND A YEAR ago, mass picketing by miners was getting lavish coverage on television, evoking near-hysteria in southern drawing rooms and editors' offices. Now groups of miners involved in mass pickets at Orgreave depot and Coal House, the NCB offices, have been on trial. In the first case, the prosecution case crumbled and was dropped. In the second, the jury acquitted the men. As the trials themselves were less dramatic than the pickets, and there were fewer immediate consequences, the lack of media coverage is not just a case of political prejudice by the media. Nonetheless, in any scale of news values, the trials deserved more public comment.

From the moment early on in the strike when the government decided not to use the Employment Acts against the miners, but to use the police to prevent the miners achieving their objectives, it was in legal difficulty. Despite the publicity about violent mobs, there were relatively few cases of actual assault by striking miners on working miners, and there were limits to which the magistrates could push the law to restrict miners charged with the relatively trivial offences of obstruction and breach of the peace.

At some point — and it is not clear when and where — it was decided to use the charges of riot and unlawful assembly against some groups of miners. These offences are notoriously hard to prove. Amongst other things, those accused of riot must be shown to have had a common purpose, which they intended to carry out using force if necessary, and that force must be enough to terrify a person of 'reasonable firmness.' Given that the only common purpose the miners had was to persuade other union members not to go to work, both prosecutions for riot so far have failed.

There are no excuses for violence by striking miners on picket lines. But where such violence did occur, it should have been dealt with by charges of assault. In fact, most violence was in relation to considerable police violence. The instructions issued to police by the Association of Chief Police Officers, revealed in the *Observer* last week, to 'incapacitate' ringleaders and strike 'fear' into the pickets through the 'impetus of horses' quite clearly show how far the police, at least, are prepared to break the common law in order to maintain 'public order'. What is meant here by public order is the police's or the government's authority. □

On the right lines.

It's 150 years ago this year that an Act of Parliament was passed creating the Great Western Railway Company.

Brunel's 118-mile long railway from London to Bristol took 8 years to build and cost £6½ million. About 4,000 men and 300 horses were involved in building the Box Tunnel near Bath alone.

There will be big celebrations on July 26th at Brunel's magnificent Bristol terminus, the 'Train Shed' at Temple Meads.

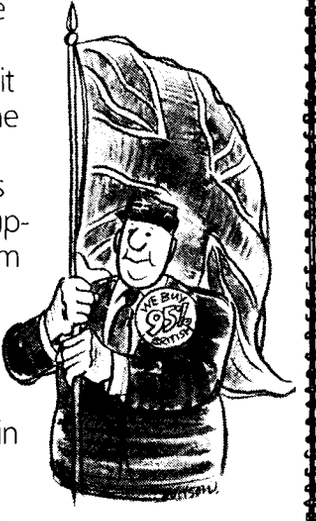
Special trains will be running. Lines revived. Harvey's of Bristol are even producing a special Brunel blend of sherry for the event.

British Rail buys British.

Of the total investment of £1,000 million currently in the pipeline for British Rail's future, much of it will be spent in the private sector.

British Rail buys 95% of its goods, supplies and services from British firms.

The Board of BR believes firmly in buying British, provided, of course, what Britain produces is best.



We're getting there.

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GOOD NEWS!

THE LEADERSHIP crisis at National Council for Civil Liberties since the resignation of Larry Gostin on 2 May (*NS* 3 May) has been resolved with the appointment of Sarah Spencer, aged 32, as new general secretary, with 'the unanimous support of the executive committee and the

Walter Castro/Fotacha

Balm in Gilead — Sarah Spencer

staff'. Describing recent internal debate as 'painful but principled' she will be hoping to broaden the membership 'by seeking affiliations from a wide range of groups, particularly churches and voluntary organisations'. The first priority for campaigning will 'undoubtedly be to alert the public to the government's Public Order Bill, to be published in the autumn, which will impose a web of restrictions on our freedom to protest peacefully'.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE GLC-FUNDED London Lesbian & Gay Centre learnt on 19 July that the GLC finance committee has found it £134,000 towards the costs of its arts and leisure activities, and its functions of providing general information to lesbians and gay men. The grant comes just two months after the Department of the Environment intervened to cancel a £119,000 GLC grant which had been intended to cover first-year staff costs (*NS* leader 10 May). The Centre has proved so popular since opening in April that it is reckoned already to be about 65 per cent self-sufficient in running costs, against 20 per cent originally predicted for 1985-86. ●

SO MUCH FOR AN 'AS OF RIGHT' EDUCATION

OXFORDSHIRE has become the latest local education authority (LEA) to make an out-of-court settlement after failing or refusing to find a place in full-time education for a handicapped teenager — conduct which is in breach of the law. BARRY HUGILL reports on a widespread evasion which somehow never gets as far as a High Court test-case, and all the publicity that *that* would entail

THE 1944 Education Act states that LEAs have a statutory obligation to provide full-time education for any handicapped youngster up to the age of 19 who wishes to receive it. An estimated 50,000 such adolescents exist — 5,000 suitable places are currently available.

MENCAP, the charity that lobbies for the rights of mentally handicapped children and adults, has several times threatened to take LEAs to court for failing to find places, only to have each authority suddenly discover that it has a spare place after all. With MENCAP all geared up to go to the High Court, the LEA backs down, and creation of a forceful public precedent is avoided.

The latest episode, in Oxfordshire, involves 16 year old Martin Upward. The happy ending is that the authority has found him a place for three years at a Further Education college starting this September — which is one year more than the legal requirement, in order to 'compensate' Martin for a 'lost year' of education in 1984-85.

Martin, who had meningitis as a baby, is confined to a wheelchair and has difficulty in speaking. Until last year he was educated in a boarding hospital which has now been closed because of spending cuts.

His mother, Angela Fowler, expected that Oxfordshire LEA would offer him alternative provision when the hospital closed. But no offer was made. Mrs Fowler wasn't even officially informed that the hospital was closing. She contacted the Oxfordshire authority herself. She assumes that as Martin was approaching his sixteenth birthday the LEA had concluded he'd be leaving 'school' and they needn't bother finding him alternative provision.

Oxfordshire offered to place Martin in a college 40 miles away from his home. Mrs Fowler rejected this because she didn't want him to have to live in a hospital again and he clearly couldn't travel 80 miles every day. The only alternative was a few hours each week of home tuition.

MENCAP interviews

She contacted MENCAP who took counsel's advice and threatened Oxfordshire with legal action. The case was due to be heard at the end of this month but became unecessary when the LEA offered Martin the college place near his home.

And what of the Department of Education & Science (DES), guardian of statutory requirements? MENCAP visited the education minister, Sir Keith Joseph, and asked him to use his powers under section 99 of the 1944 Act to instruct Oxfordshire to meet its obligations.

He refused, because to do so would 'open the floodgates', with LEAs throughout the country forced to spend more on their provision for the handicapped. MENCAP was left in no doubt that the DES doesn't want to see this happening. It was shortly after this meeting that Oxfordshire made its out of court settlement.

Chris Davies/Network

It's all too much for a chap. . .those brutes of teachers. . .parents reading up the '44 Act. . .MENCAP on the doorstep

Rolf Hermelin for MENCAP wants to know why LEAs always settle out of court. He suspects that the reluctance of the DES to see a High Court test case might have something to do with it. He also wants to know why Sir Keith refuses to issue a circular clarifying the law for LEAs. ●

Women impress plight of West Bank on UN meeting

ISRAELI refusal to allow eight Palestinian women from the West Bank to attend the Nairobi forum (15-20 July) which ended the UN Decade for Women (*NS* 5 July) backfired in its intended effect. The only result was to help the effort of the half-dozen Palestinian women who *were* allowed through to focus attention on the problems they face living under occupation.

Women refused an exit visa included several of the most respected activists in the occupied territories — for instance, Sameeha Khalid, the middle-aged head of In'ash al Usra (*Family Rehabilitation Society*). No stranger to military restrictions on her movements (though she has never been charged with any offence by the Israeli authorities) she was placed under town arrest for three consecutive years between 1980-1983. For the past five years she has been refused permission to leave the West Bank.

All of the women who were refused permission to leave were given only reasons of 'security' as an explanation. There is no appeal against such a restriction, which is frequently used to inhibit participation of Palestinian lawyers, journalists and academics in international gatherings.

Israel was plainly nervous, following the hostile resolutions about its behaviour on the West Bank passed at the earlier UN Women's Decade conferences, in Mexico City in 1975 and in Copenhagen in 1980. The prospect of the attendance of the first Palestinian contingent from the occupied territories, rather than PLO representatives, was obviously an embarrassment to Israel's own delegation.

The official Israeli delegation to Nairobi, ironically enough, contended that, as a result of the occupation: 'Arab women are growing out of their traditional passive role, they are becoming more active participants both in the sphere of family life and in the sphere of public life . . .'

The half dozen Palestinian women who did manage to leave the West Bank for the UN forum jointly ran a peace workshop along with non-governmental Israeli delegates. Such co-operation is commonplace in the West Bank where Israeli and Palestinian women have frequently joined forces against the occupation, much to the irritation of the Israeli authorities.

See also feature p22

Deborah Pugh

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American Bar has $50m swing through Britain

THAT WAS one helluva week! Ten thousand lawyers plus spouses finished the official programme of their sweep through London, Edinburgh and Dublin this Tuesday 23 July. Shopping sprees to spend $50m, thee-aters and moosicals, the quaint old (*you can say that again*) Inns of Court — and for the top 288 delegates and preening pair-bonds, tea on the lawns of the Palace.

Let's stop Yankee-baiting for a moment. The standard and content of the serious part of the American Bar Association (ABA) 1985 Congress, this year held in London, was outstanding. The yellow-label press-badge was the Open Sesame to any session you cared to attend, from the esoteric ('Enforcement of Maritime Lien Claims') — the press were conspicuously absent here — to the apocalyptic ('Recent Developments in Third party Nuclear Liability') and the avant-garde ('Plenary Session: Cohabitation without Formal Marriage,' advance reservations required).

Thatcher's remarks at the session on terrorism caught headlines but the nub of it was the US State Department's Legal Adviser, Abraham Soafer, outlining a legal justification for 'appropriate force' to be used in a wat against terrorism. He argued that 'to the extent that they are state supported, or beyond the capacity of their governments to control, we are entitled now to use necessary and proportionate force to end such attacks.'

Still rattling the sabre, Soafer went on to say that: international terrorists should 'heed the President's warning' that American patience has run out. But he then more meekly recommended that the best means of tackling terrorism is through an international legal framework.

Mrs Thatcher's contribution — emphasising international links between terrorists and urging the press to draw up a code of restraint during crises to starve terrorists of 'the oxygen of publicity' — led the ABA to announce the setting up of a commission to study the matter. The step was promptly condemned by most of America's media chiefs, who argued that the best code is the American Constitution.

Questions left over from 1787

Reference to that document, drawn up in 1787 mainly by lawyers trained at the Middle Temple, sparked off a swingeing attack by the US Attorney-General, Edwin Meese III, when he addressed the ABA. (See also *Miscellany*).

Meese argued that recent American court decisions, especially by the Supreme Court, have undermined the original intentions of those who drew up the Constitution. This was no academic exercise. Meese and the Reagan administration are engaged in a campaign to stop the Supreme Court overruling legislation which some states are in the process of designing, under the influence of the religious right-wing, to severely limit abortion, and to allow government subsidies to church schools.

The Reagan Administration view of the judiciary's role was hair-raisingly given tacit backing by the US Chief Justice, Warren Burger, whose after-dinner speech in London outlined the limited role of the Federal government when the Founding Fathers approved the constitution.

Paul Martin

Are lawyers the clog on Sizewell-type enquiries?

THE BEST way to improve major public inquiries would be to get rid of most of the lawyers. That's the conclusion of an exhaustive report on the two and a quarter year Sizewell Inquiry just published by Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA).

The report by TCPA executive member Jennifer Armstrong recommends that neither side at inquiries should be legally represented. She suggests replacing a single inspector by a panel of at least three, none of whom need be lawyers, although they should have the assistance of a team of barristers.

Her report urges the establishment of an indpendent fund to help objectors with expenses. In order to save time, the report also recommends that all proofs of evidence should be taken as read. At the Sizewell Inquiry it took the Central Electricity Generating Board three months just to read out its evidence — usually to a large empty hall.

Rob Edwards

CORRECTION

Members of the Furniture Timber & Allied Trades Union at H. Morris Ltd of Glasgow are demanding implementation of a 39 hour week, not 30 hour week, as a typing error had it in *NS* 12 July, this page.

MISCELLANY

Up against the wall

Just how much more self-censorship of the media can US Attorney-General Edwin Meese III, and Prime Minister Thatcher I be thinking of if coverage of the TWA affair didn't meet their specifications? How does anyone suppose Arab, Greek, and Israeli reporters uncovered the names of several US Intelligence agents among the hostages? (Clue: there were men listed from Virginia whose photographs the UK and the US press never published). Do Meese and Thatcher think the English-language press they've been posturing for is all there is? The US press jumped at the chance, immediately after the hostage crisis, to make Reagan's cancer operation appear a feat of superhuman vitality (remember when the same newspapers refused to print Gary Trudeau's cartoon voyage inside Reagan's brain, just before the 1980 election?) so media handlers at the White House and Number 10 ought to rest content at just how effective self-censorship already is. But, lo! a Bill has been proposed by the Republican whip of the US Senate, Ted Stevens, which would establish the death penalty (by firing squad) for espionage. The final section of the Bill, which has a good chance of passing this year, provides that 'the Attorney General shall make live video and audio coverage of any execution carried out under this subsection available to the public.' And who would be expected to carry such Khomeini-level stuff? Why, the media.

Shabby insults

We haven't plundered Hansard *for inanities recently. Of course, it keeps some good things out. Last week in the Lords there was Lord* (né *Joe) Dean referring to a Commons 'concubine' to limit Parliamentary debate on drinking in sports grounds, which is a sensational development. Alas, he meant Commons 'conclave'. But the hard-pressed Hansard persons make their own occasional slips, as, yes, yes, don't we all. Take the report on the battle over whether to end the solicitors' monopoly on conveyancing. Liberal MP and barrister Alex Carlile* (né *Falik) waxed lyrical about the services provided by his local solicitors, including 'boundary surveys and financial advice'. Austin Mitchell* (né *exactly that, which is getting to be an unusual circumstance in male British public life, as in female) answered him, as the Labour MP whose private member's bill threatens the solicitors. Mitchell cited the solicitors' bible,* Cordery, *which writes that solicitors are* not *obliged to give financial advice. Retorted Carlile brusquely: 'Your* Cordery *is as threadbare as your arguments'. In Hansard,* Cordery *is improved to 'your corduroy'.*

Indelicate cabbages

We cavil at our peril at anything awry in *Hansard*, not merely because it's an open invitation to fate to make something go wrong in this column, but because *Hansard* is an occasional repository of the most useful information, food and drink to the *Trivial Pursuits* player. Get this one. St Helena buff John Marek MP (*né* Marek, and *unchanged*, though it's Czech) put a PQ to overseas development min Tim Raison. This week he got the answer. Never mind what the question was. The answer is that in that mid-Atlantic island where Napoleon drew his index-linked there are four varieties of cabbage-tree: the black, the white, the he-cabbage, and the she-cabbage. The she-cabbage, discloses Raison, is the rarest variety. But efforts to propagate it are proving successful. Who says there's something wrong with our Atlantic policy?

Knees-up for the '45

Stimulated by Peter Kellner's remarks in his NS *column on 5 June that apparently no one was celebrating the exact 40th anniversary of Labour's landslide victory of 1945, a group of Silver Age lefties, including F. A. Ridley (88), the Marxist historian who knew Trotsky, and Ian Mikardo (77), whose declaration that if Labour gained office they would take EVERYTHING into common ownership was passed on the nod at the 1944 Party Conference, are having a four-day celebratory binge at the Torriano Meeting Centre, North London from 25-28 July. That covers the actual date of the 1945 vote counting: 26 July. Also among the gathering will be Philip Sansom, a leading member of the Freedom Group of Anarchists who was imprisoned that year of 1945, and Colin Ward, editor of the magazine* Anarchy. *After three days of speeches, Sunday will be more relaxed with some period films:* 'Odd Man Out' *and* 'A Matter of Life & Death'. *What, no showing of Alan Bennett's* Forty Years On?

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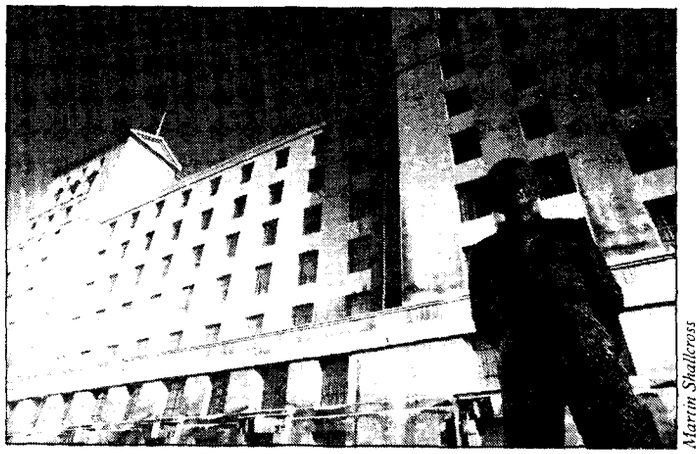
INVESTIGATIONS — DUNCAN CAMPBELL and Patrick Forbes



Martin Shallcross

Looking like the work of Albert Speer — MinDef in Whitehall

NEW WHITEHALL BUNKER

A SECRET NEW BUNKER control centre is now being constructed many floors below the Ministry of Defence (MoD) headquarters building in Whitehall. The new centre is codenamed PINDAR. It will replace both the Cabinet Office's crisis control centre, known as COBRA, and the central military control room, the Defence Situation Centre — at present vulnerably located on the fifth floor *above* ground at the MoD.

PINDAR is one of three underground war control bunkers now being considered for central London. A second, backup site for PINDAR is to be built 100 feet below ground in London's High Holborn. US military officials have also applied to the Defence Ministry to convert a third deep underground site as a wartime control bunker.

It would replace surface facilities, possibly including the US Navy's Fleet Command Center for the Mediterranean and Eastern Atlantic, which is presently based in Grosvenor Square, Mayfair.

Secrecy about the new bunker has been blown through carelessness by private builders, who have been working at the MoD since the beginning of 1985. Two serious fires were accidentally started during recent cutting and welding operations.

The first fire, on 4 March, occurred in a plant room six floors below ground. The second, early on Saturday 27 April, occurred in one of PINDAR's main control rooms, an underground hall 200 feet long, five storeys deep. Publicity was given to the second fire, but the Ministry managed at the time to avoid unwelcome enquiries about the circumstances and location of the blaze.

But in response to *NS* questions, the Defence Ministry this week admitted that 'Project PINDAR' had been underway since 1984. It 'involves the refurbishment of existing accommodation and installing some communications equipment.' There had been 'accidental fires'. London Fire Brigade officials said last week that the Ministry had indeed suffered a fire on 27 April, 'deep underground . . . The causes of the fire remain confidential, it is a matter for the person concerned . . .'.

PINDAR was devised in 1980, after the Cabinet had ordered a review of military Home Defence plans, and the Iranian siege had underlined the importance and possible vulnerability of the Cabinet Office's emergency 'briefing room', COBRA. Senior military officials also pointed out that the Ministry of Defence's above ground operations rooms were extremely vulnerable to conventional bombing attack.

New NATO war planning assumptions introduced in 1979 now anticipate a phase of conventional warfare before nuclear attack, during which government and military operations will initially be run from London.

When completed, PINDAR will be used both for civil emergencies, such as major strikes and terrorist hostage-taking, and for the first phases of a major war. PINDAR and its backup site would first be used to co-ordinate government 'Transition To War' plans, and then to oversee military operations while Britain is under conventional attack.

Before a nuclear attack occurred, however, the War Cabinet, Central Defence Staff and major military commands would all be evacuated and established in protected headquarters far from London.

Plans for PINDAR were held up for two years by a row between then Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine and Defence Secretary John Nott about who would pay for the new bunkers. The issue was whether the cost should be charged to central government as a whole, or just the Defence Ministry on its own. Hesleltine, unlike Nott, regarded PINDAR as primarily a military project. He stuck to his guns when he took over at the MoD in 1982, and soon after PINDAR was approved as a secret military project, costing at least an estimated £20 million.

The PINDAR backup site in Holborn until recently contained an A-bomb proof long distance telephone exchange, called 'Kingsway'. It is located in deep-level tunnels below Chancery Lane underground station, first built in 1942 as a civilian bomb shelter.

Kingsway exchange, which is connected to a 12-mile network of deep level tunnels, has now been dismantled, and ownership is believed to have been transferred from BT to the MoD. American officials have made enquiries about a similar deep level World War 2 shelter below Goodge Street underground station.

PINDAR was formerly the 'South Citadel' below the Defence Ministry. Two citadels, South and North, were constructed underneath the MoD's headquarters when it was built during the Second World War. According to WW2 records, the two citadels will accommodate 550 people, protected from the heaviest of conventional bombing.

If the Ministry of Defence building is flattened by conventional or nuclear attack, staff in PINDAR can escape by a new tunnel under Whitehall, connecting the Ministry to the Cabinet Office and No 10 Downing Street. In emergency, they could use BT's deep level cable tunnel network to escape to secret street exits as widely separated as Bethnal Green in the east of London, or Maida Vale in the west.

Government officials are particularly worried about the likely public reaction if it became known that the Americans had been permitted to build deep bunkers in central London. Details of the PINDAR plan have been suppressed for the same reason. In 1981, the Home Office issued a leaflet which tried to shore up the credibility of its civil defence plans by denying the existence of 'deep bunkers . . . to protect the privileged few'.

Under current Home Office plans, the government would expect Londoners to 'stay put' on the grounds that no part of the country is completely safe. Meanwhile, key ministers, military leaders and officials will be evacuated to safe locations or accommodated in centres such as PINDAR. ●

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Improper police erections

METROPOLITAN POLICE officers this week pleaded guilty to the unauthorised erection of three towers and 4 posts outside their New Scotland Yard headquarters.

An application to install the towers and posts arrived at Westminister Council offices months *after* they had already been put in. Labour Councillors on Westminster Council have complained about the Yard's improper erections, which will soon carry television surveillance cameras.

Westminster's planning officials told the *NS* that the police had indeed failed to notify the council of the development, and hold consultations, as is required. The Council has condemned the TV towers as a 'visual intrusion', and asked for them to be removed. Scotland Yard were sent a formal refusal by the Council at the beginning of June. But the towers are still there.

Seeking mitigation, the police have offered to paint the towers light grey. And they plan to take them down by the middle of 1987, they claim, when refurbishment of New Scotland Yard is complete. But if the Council choose to serve an enforcement notice, the presence of the camera towers will be illegal. Until then, Scotland Yard can get away with it, since Scotland Yard is officially a 'crown building', and exempt from most official regulations binding on ordinary persons and their businesses. ●

Mail order war

NUCLEAR missile warheads, recently withdrawn from the European theatre nuclear stockpile, have been offered for sale by mail order in the United States. Readers of a US gun magazine were last year offered delivery of nuclear warheads for a mere $150. The advertisers were a military surplus parts store, the Barnacle Wharf Trading Company of Newark, Ohio.

They weren't joking. Purchasers were supplied with warheads from the 'Honest John' tactical nuclear missile, which is only now being withdrawn from NATO service in Greece and Turkey. A British missile regiment used Honest John until 1976. Although the conventional explosives and nuclear elements had been taken out, the ten foot long warhead assembly was still significantly radioactive, showing that it had not been a dummy. Fusing and control mechanisms were still intact.

One purchaser had a midnight visit from the FBI three months later, after news of his ownership of an atom bomb had leaked out, the US magazine *Progressive* has reported. But the major obstacle to a A-bomb in every American home is, it seems, that the surplus dealers don't take credit cards. ●

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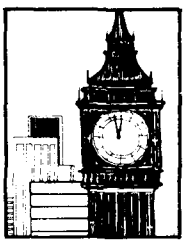

BRIAN SEDGEMORE MP

Ordure, Ordure in the Chamber . . .

ONE DISGRUNTLED MP has gone off for the recess complaining bitterly that one secretary, one telephone and the use of his own wits hardly provided sufficient back-up resources to enable him to conduct an investigation into fraud at Johnson Matthey. He's in a bit of a quandary though. His colleagues argue that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer who can call on the help of all the staff of the Treasury, the Inland Revenue, including the Special Investigations Branch, the Bank of England, the Fraud Squad and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions can't get anywhere, then extra facilities may not be what's needed.

Personally I'm tempted to side with my disgruntled colleague. Certainly I'd imagine that if you were conducting an investigation into fraud you could spend a lot of time seeing a lot of people and get nowhere. For example a journalist — let's call him Peter Grimeditch — might ring you up and say he's got a lot of information on the elusive Mr X and he'd like to impart it. Possibly when he arrived at the Commons it would transpire that he'd got no information at all but on the contrary was seeking it from you for a series of articles he wanted to write on maritime fraud. I expect that there are many Peter Grimeditches around.

Some MPs, while agreeing that an investigation of fraud required more back-up staff than a backbench MP has, argued that such investigations are not their job. I dare say they're right. Just occasionally the government finds itself a victim of its own parsimony and puritanism in this field. Sometimes governments know that there's been incompetence, mismanagement or negligence without knowing where or with whom the blame lies. So either they try to hush things up and minimise the damage while proclaiming pompously that we're all to blame, or, worse, none of us is to blame; or they work through usual and unusual channels to let bankbench MPs know that they would like evidence which pins individuals or institutions down.

The dilemma for the government lies in its awareness that if they give bankbench MPs more researchers and better facilities either as individuals or as members of groups or Select Committees they risk strengthening the hand of Parliament against the executive in a manner which the executive cannot control. So the facilities are not granted and everyone suffers. All too often the result is uncreative tension and inadequate investigation which leave the public bewildered and disenchanted.

Next term some of us will make a big effort to change things but we won't succeed. So why doesn't Labour's Shadow Cabinet give us a pledge that improving back-up facilities for backbench MPs will rank high on the list priorities?

'ORDURE, ORDURE' cries the Speaker every day. He's right. The House of Commons is a shitty place. It stinks and always has stunk — even before the overflow in the ladies lavatory threatened a typhoid outbreak in the cloistured slums where some 50 MPs are provided with a little table, an artificial light and the facilities to listen in to each other's huddled telephone conversations. Some say it's Ruritanian, others monastic.

Even in the Chamber of the House of Commons the fragrances are not always what they should be. MPs are constantly falling asleep through carbon monoxide poisoning. In theory it can't happen because down in the bowels of the earth the Periscope Operator who peers through a special Scope keeps a count of the numbers of MPs present.

When numbers rise he contacts the Controller of Air who is then supposed to release more oxygen into the Chamber. Nobody knows what keeps going wrong but I suspect that the two of them cannot only see but also hear what is going on and so fall asleep themselves.

SOME TORY MPs insist that the House of Commons is a good club set in a rather nice licensed gothic cathedral and that the demand for better facilities therefore misses the point. In a way Tony Benn agrees when he says that the place should be closed down and turned into a museum.

I can see merit in both arguments. When I first became a Member I asked one of the officials of long standing and immaculate dress why the architecture was so stifling and the temperature so high. He replied: 'We get a lot of elderly people here, Sir, and we want to keep them alive. Besides, we can't have radicals like you getting excited, can we Sir?' I suppose not.

The House of Commons is very much a place for men and a denial of everything that's feminine or feminist. In the voting lobbies there are only lavatories for men so when the Speaker calls out 'Lock the doors' women MPs have to discipline themselves. The tables in the Members' Dining Room have no candles or flowers. And the Members' barber is only just becoming Unisex. When Ann Clwyd first went along to get her hair cut he didn't even have any hot tongs to curl it.

For some of us who eat snacks in the Members tea-room it's been a daunting term. The supply of home-made almond slices has been cut off. They used to be imported from North Wales by Anthony Steen MP. He brought them in on his bicycle. Then the Head Chef who believes in high-tech food production from local ovens put a stop to it. I've complained.

JOHN BIFFIN, the Leader of the House, tells us that we don't deserve better facilities, more secretaries and researchers or higher salaries. He argues that even though Members of Parliament are a lot better off than they used to be, the Executive feels less challenged by Parliament than it used to. Biffin, who speaks with a deceptively pleasant burr, is one of the Old Men of the Chamber, a bit like Michael Foot, another of those who believes that MPs have never had it so good.

Foot and Biffin are best regarded as constitutional anachronisms for whom the eighteenth century lingers on. They believe that politics is about words and that to be a word-smith you don't need facilities. The work of Select Committees, investigations, campaigns, expertise, dealing with the daily problems of constituents — for them these are the froth of politics.

Biffin seems particularly upset that the costs for the Houses of Parliament, excluding MPs' and peers' pay and allowances, rose from £35 million in 1981-2 to £48 million in 1984-5. The Prime Minister, too, with her grocer's mentality, is upset by these figures. The facilities lavished on Biffen and the Prime Minister enable them to operate in an atmosphere of public affluence which contrasts sharply with the public squalor that faces the rest of us. Their populist penny-pinching attitude to Parliament has the intended effect of encouraging the press and the public to denigrate the House of Commons.

Some of the results of this situation are ludicrous. Some MPs wine and dine on the Embassy not only for the sake of the brotherhood of man, but because it's free. Some, mainly Tories, rely on help from powerful vested interests who presumably will one day want to see a return on their investment.

So for the most part we're treated like dirt and because we're content to put up with it no doubt deserve to be. We've become the laughing stock of the legislatures of the Western world. But as members of a Chamber of Cowards why should we think it could be otherwise?

In the distance, and though for some it's far, far away and would take a journey through time to get there, patronage beckons. Yes, it's the prospect of pleasing the patron that keeps most of us in order, down at heel and content to merge with the squalor of our surroundings and manage with the emptiness of our lives. □

Peter Kellner is on holiday.

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CITY GETS OFF LIGHTLY

Nothing much has changed between the Slater Walker rescue in 1977 and the Johnson Matthey Bankers affair. CHARLES RAW on why City scandals will go on happening as long as the police's fraud squad is out of its depth and the Bank of England is not fully accountable

ON THE SAME day last week that Chancellor Lawson announced in the Commons that a fraud squad investigation had begun into the collapse of Johnson Matthey Bankers last autumn, a leading criminal lawyer, Michael Hill QC, told the American Bar Association's convention in London that he believed that the Roskill Committee, due to report in October on how complicated fraud trials should be conducted, would recommend retaining trial by jury rather than some other system of specialist judges.

If that is right — and, as Hill said, the weight of evidence being presented to Roskill appears to be in favour of the retention of jury trials for fraud — it will be a blow to those who believe that the best way to curb the unacceptably high level of financial misfeasance in the City is radically to overhaul the whole system of official investigation and prosecution. At present the fraud squad itself is, bluntly, out of its depth in sophisticated financial operations. Even if it believes it has got sufficient evidence to prosecute, it still has to convince the Director of Public Prosecutions, who will not give the go-ahead unless he thinks the chances of success in a long and expensive trial are good. The failure of the system has been all too evident in the commodities fields, where only one major successful prosecution has taken place.

Even if a jury returns a guilty verdict, the culprits often get quite light sentences since many judges seem to take an extremely lenient view of theft by fraud by comparison with other means of removing other people's money. Indeed, there has been recently an important example of judicial attitudes in connection with the Lloyd's scandals. Lord Wilberforce, a law lord who is also chairman of the Lloyd's appeal tribunal, sharply moderated a decision of Lloyd's own disciplinary committee: the committee had found that former star underwriter Ian Posgate should be *permanently* banned from Lloyd's, while Wilberforce said he should be suspended for just *six* months.

Posgate had not been accused of fraud, nor, of course, were the proceeding criminal ones, although the offences against Lloyd's rules he was found guilty of were serious enough. The toughness of the Lloyd's internal disciplinary proceedings, now eventually seeing the light of day, must be encouraging for those, including the government, who believe in 'self-policing' for the City. But they also serve even more to highlight the inadequacies of the state machinery i.e. the police, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the courts, who have so far achieved little in complicated financial matters involving important City figures and institutions.

WHEELING IN the fraud squad at Johnson Matthey is therefore unlikely to shed the sort of detailed light on the whole affair that is needed quickly, and in particular on the central issue of the relationship between Johnson Matthey and the Bank of England.

The Bank has already come in for a great deal of criticism for its handling of the affair. The fraud squad investigation must add to its embarrassment since in its account of the affair published only last month it wrote that 'the judgement of management in approving so many loans which have required substantial provisions was clearly defective. However, no evidence of fraud by the directors or staff of JMB has been discovered, except in one case dealt with before, and immaterial to, the collapse'.

Still, it's true that the allegations by Brian Sedgemore and Dennis Skinner in the privilege of the House have concentrated on the bank's customers, namely the £1.5 million loan to the private property company of the chairman of Sumrie Clothes (which I suspect will turn out to be irrelevant) and the two biggest customers described delicately by the Bank of England as 'loosely associated groups of companies run by businessmen from Pakistan'. Perhaps this makes them easier targets than had they been blue-blooded customers of a top-drawer City bank.

'. . .many judges seem to take an extremely lenient view of theft by fraud by comparison with other means of removing other peoples' money'

As far as the faceless men who actually ran Johnson Matthey are concerned the Bank had this to say about the grossly inaccurate and misleading figures they were being fed in Johnson Matthey's supposedly regular but late monthly returns: 'It appears that most of the misreporting was due to the deficient systems in JMB, a lack of understanding of the Bank's reporting requirements and lack of co-ordination between different departments, rather than to a deliberate attempt to mislead.' Now that statement must be seen as something of a hostage to fortune by the Bank.

But the main issue on the Bank is not so much its competence in carrying out its supervisory role, but its accountability for the use of public money in supporting bankrupt City institutions. Lawson has already made it clear that he disapproved of the way the Bank committed public money to keep Johnson Matthey from going under without consulting him. But he claimed in the Commons last week that 'it was striking how open the Government had been in revealing to the House the details of this matter in sharp contrast to what happened under the Labour Government during the "lifeboat" affair'.

There were Labour jeers at this reference to the scheme for rescuing City banks but in fact it is true. The present government and the Bank have given more information more quickly — even if it is not enough — than was given in the mid-seventies following the secondary banking crisis and the establishment of the lifeboat. But the Johnson Matthey operation is not so much modelled on the lifeboat as on the support operation mounted for Slater Walker between 1975 and 1978, whose bad loans were indemnified and which was bought by the Bank of England in much the same way. The Bank would not at that time disclose the full financial details of the operation, and, to judge from the way ministers dealt with questions on the matter, the Labour government appeared to do little to put pressure on the Bank.

At least now the Bank appears to have decided to publish the cost of supporting Johnson Matthey: as at 30 April the cost is given at £68 million, half of which is met by the Bank and half by other City banks. (At risk also is the £100 million of capital the Bank has put up. Whether it loses any of this will depend on whether Johnson Matthey can be resold profitably.) To this day the Bank has never clearly revealed the cost of supporting Slater Walker.

Nevertheless estimates can be made. After the Bank bought Slater Walker in 1977 for £3.5 million — no adequate explanation has ever been given of why they paid *anything* for it — sums were paid to the bank to replace the loan loss indemnities the size of these sums has never been officially disclosed but they probably amounted to about £35 million. The hope was that sufficient of the bank's assets

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could be recouped and reinvested to produce profits to cover this sum. Again the Bank does not publish clear figures, but it looks as if Slater Walker has accumulated profits of some £19 million under the Bank's management. But that still leaves the Bank — and the country — nearly £20 million out of pocket eight years on.

BOTH THE Johnson Matthey operation and its predecessor Slater Walker were carried out by the Bank because of its belief that the collapse of important names poses such a threat to confidence in the City that the price of allowing outright collapse is too high. Whether the belief is correct is a matter of opinion, although to test it could be an expensive business.

But what is wrong is that, having used public money to avoid the test, the subsequent affairs of the failed bank should be conducted in the secrecy so dear to the Bank. The recent experience of Lloyd's, where membership continues to rise in spite of the massive adverse publicity, demonstrates that airing past misfeasance does not necessarily damage confidence.

The way the Bank handles matters only leads to the suspicion that people are being protected. In the case of Slater Walker, for example, there was virtually no public information about how the Bank set about the job of collecting the debts: whose loans were written off, what deals were done with which debtors, who was pursued in the courts, whether it discovered any matters it felt were improper. It was effectively a liquidation but conducted without the supervision of a committee of creditors, or any proper public reporting requirements.

It is this that must change. If the Bank is to be allowed to pursue its policy of rescuing failed banks in the name of confidence by absorbing them, it should be required to report fully and publicly on what it finds and how it subsequently directs its affairs. The account they have given of the Johnson Matthey affair is a start, but does not go far enough in specific detail. Only with a much fuller account will be the suspicion be removed that people are being allowed to get off 'scot free' as Skinner put it at the cost of public money. Such full reporting could go hand in hand with any fraud squad investigation whether or not this results in successful prosecution. □

TOP HAT SALARIES

'WELCOME, SIR ROBERT'

A private sector pay explosion put Mrs Thatcher on the spot over pay rises for top public servants. JOHN RENTOUL tracks the upward spiral

Sue Packer

MRS THATCHER was forced to accept pay rises of up to 46 per cent for top civil servants, military chiefs and judges by her government's policy of encouraging wider differentials in the private sector. Top salaries in the private sector are 'getting out of hand', according to Bernard Gottlieb of Incomes Data Services, which monitors earnings, although the Top Salaries Review Body didn't put it quite like that.

The Review Body found that the average increase in company chief executives' salary, plus bonus, commission and profit-share, was 11½ per cent last year, with higher percentage increases at higher salary levels. Average earnings rose by 8.2 per cent over the same period.

Since 1979, the top 10 per cent of male earners (public and private sector added together) have increased their total pay by 20 per cent more than the average, according to the New Earnings Survey, while the mandarins, top brass and judges have merely kept pace with the average, usually hurrying along a few months behind.

This year, the top public servants risked falling permanently behind the latest spurt, but the Review Body cleverly avoided basing its case on direct comparisons with the private sector, using instead the Thatcherite language of market forces, saying that the gap was now so large that it was becoming difficult to retain people of sufficient calibre, or to persuade high-earning barristers to become judges.

The government has protested that it hasn't made the pay award, but is merely accepting the Review Body recommendation. Review Body findings, however, have only been accepted in Mrs Thatcher's second term. In her first four years, its recommendations were ritually turned down. In 1981, for instance, Mrs Thatcher said: 'The government believes it would not be right to increase the salaries of those senior people by more than the amount which has been offered for the non-industrial civil service as a whole.'

In 1983 the Review Body recommended increases of up to 15 per cent and the government put off acting on the report until after the election, when the rises were paid in full. Last year the Review Body recommended 6½ per cent, which was accepted in two stages, but said it wanted to make a 'comprehensive study' of among other things retention problems, which it did this year.

The government has been painted into a corner by increasing evidence of runaway wage inflation, speeded by the reduction it ordered in top tax rates, at the very highest levels of the private sector. Incomes Data Services has found that managerial differentials as a whole, which narrowed up until 1979, have been steadily widening again.

BUT AT THE very top there has been a pay explosion, as company profits have boomed and incentive schemes, including share option deals, have spread like wildfire. Perhaps most awkward for the government has been the acceleration of pay rises for the top few people in the City of London, as brokers and bankers prepare for the opening up of the Stock Exchange to foreign financial conglomerates. Two weeks ago merchant bankers Kleinwort Benson poached eight stockjobbers from Wedd Durlacher, the stock-jobbing firm which Barclays is buying, for an inducement thought to be £1 million between them, and at an average salary of over £250,000 each.

Graham Lindsay of headhunters Korn Ferry says that the very top gilts and bond dealers can command over £300,000, and that the top rates have shot up over the past few years because of a new emphasis on individual performance

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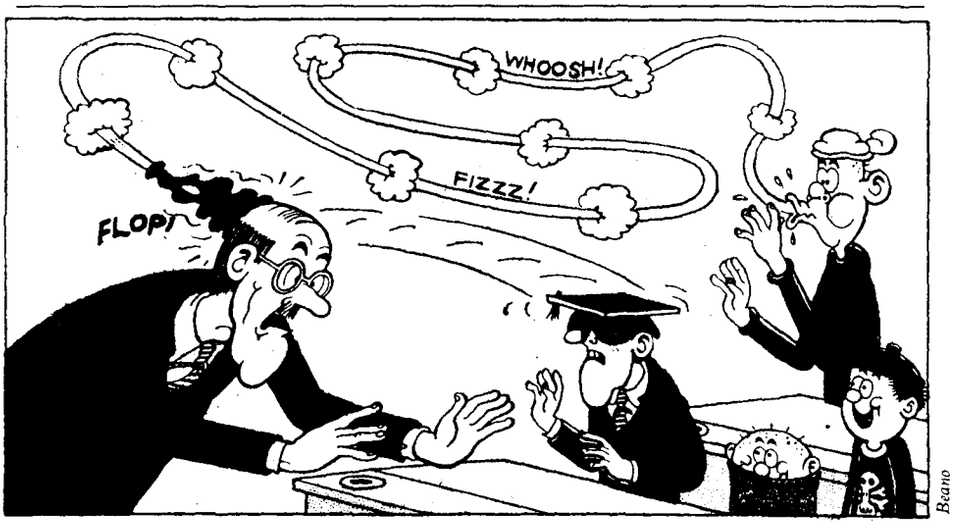
incentives. The *Economist* estimates that they have risen by 60 per cent in the last two years, although basic rates have only kept pace with inflation. Senior partners in stockbroking firms can now earn up to £½ million a year including often substantial bonuses. Scrimgeour Kemp-Gee paid an across-the-board bonus of 165 per cent in the year to March 1985.

These salary levels make the Review Board's survey of public companies seem a little irrelevant. The Survey estimated the average salary (plus bonus etc) for chief executives of companies with turnover of more than £1,150 million to be a mere £110,300 a year.

The complaint of civil service personnel managers is that mid-ranking civil servants are increasingly leaving Whitehall to work for banks and financial companies, in a way they haven't been attracted to industrial or commercial companies. But the Review Body under Lord Plowden was unable to come up with any real evidence that this was happening, or that average rises of 12.2 per cent would stop it. Rather it seems merely to have responded to the feeling amongst top public servants that their status demanded a higher income.

In Tory logic a 'maximum' £75,000 salary for public servants, which is what Cabinet Secretary Sir Robert Armstrong, Lord Chief Justice Lane and Chief of Defence Staff Sir Edwin Bramall will go up to next year, cannot compete in the 'free market' with the City — especially when perks like share options are taken into account (the Review Body did not include them in its comparative figures). And this is acknowledged by the hiring of 'special cases' from outside at 'special' rates, like Peter Levene, Ministry of Defence chief arms buyer at £95,000, and Tony Wilson, head of the government accountancy service at £75,000. □

EDUCATION



Beano

LET'S ALL SPIT AT TEACHER

The government has pronounced on the value of teachers to society: very little. MARION REED offers a job and status description

IF, AFTER THE Top People's pay awards, anyone has the least doubt where teachers stand on the social scale or in the public estimation, they have only to open the *Beano*.

The Bash Street kids have been baiting, browbeating, tormenting and foiling 'Teacher' for the past 30 years, to the immense gratification of school-age (and donnish) readers everywhere. He is as typical of his species now as he was then: bullied by the Head, who is several degrees or, anyway, salary increments his superior; to whom he toadies nauseatingly in public while inwardly fuming, he is just one notch above the pupils, Matron, Cook and Winston the cat.

It would be difficult to find a trade or profession with a more disreputable public image. The resentment of millions who still bear grudges for past sufferings and humiliations at school has found expression in the almost universal condemnation of teachers' strike action.

Teachers stand accused of:
1) Harming their pupils by spoiling their examination chances and thereby jeopardising future job opportunities (a line particularly favoured by Tory spokespersons!)
2) Exposing pupils to all manner of evil by letting them loose in the lunch-hour.
3) Lack of professional dedication.
4) Setting a bad example.

Teaching is, in any case, a part-time job with mammoth holidays (read: undeserved).

Most kids regard school as an endurance test inflicted on them by misguided elders; they survive by having as many laughs as possible, mostly at teachers' expense. Like the counter clerks in Unemployment Benefit offices teachers are directly in the line of fire. Baiting and riling them is a popular pastime and much better fun than working; it is rewarded by esteem from less enterprising classmates and sometimes by the sight of your victim totally demoralised, even in tears. Personal remarks are levelled at clothes, appearance, figure, accent, politics, competence, anything that comes to mind, without hesitation or restraint. Naturally, it would be unthinkable — unprofessional and immature — to retaliate in kind. Not only insults are hurled: teacher is a target for any number of guided missiles: pieces of rubber, paper darts, chalk, ink, pens, books, small rubber balls and even spit.

The responsibilities are awesome. The teacher must ensure exam passes for pupils who often express total unconcern; this requires endless prodding, pushing and cajoling; the best laid schemes can be foiled by the ingenuity of fifth year pupils, who with far more important things to do, manage to be absent for two out of every three lessons. In schools where academic standards are said to be 'high' and where parents, at least, take exams seriously, the pressure is even greater; the teacher feels compelled to make up for missed lessons by extra lunchtime or after school coaching. This is quite separate from work voluntarily undertaken before school (8am) or after, simply because the required number of periods cannot be fitted into the timetable.

WITH ALL this work filling the lunch-hour slot (don't let us forget detentions for those who 'can't' stay after school) it is difficult to see how all the clubs and societies, plus the dreaded 'duties' get fitted in at all.

A dinner duty involves patrolling corridors and grounds, breaking up fights stopping or clearing up after acts of vandalism, diverting litter into litter bins, breaking up smoking, and other vice-rings; providing a 'presence' that will hopefully deter an outbreak of mob violence. For, make no mistake, 500 to 1,000 pupils is a potential unruly mob; performing such a duty is much worse than teaching where there is at least a confined indoor space, agreed rules of conduct (well, up to a point) and the possibility of back-up support in emergencies.

The reward for this pastoral activity is a free lunch, currently priced at 62p making an hourly rate of £1.24 between the hours of one and two when most of the working population are enjoying a recreational hour in subsidised or free canteens; or in pubs, restaurants (armed with LVs) or at the very least, a quiet sandwich and thermos in the corner of the office with the phone off the hook.

For the teacher who 'avails him or her self of the benefit of a hot meal', half of every lunch hour is an involuntary duty anyway, since meals are generally taken with pupils. As yet there are no Executive Dining Rooms (though Sir Keith Joseph might be favourably disposed to this as an alternative to a 46 per cent pay rise, in order to retain the 'good' and 'deserving' teachers that he has ways and means of identifying). So when a pupil opposite pours salt or water on another's plate (a favourite diversion) it cannot simply be ignored.

The noise level is nerve-wracking, the conditions bad for digestion. School meals are scaled to pupil, not teacher size, though male teachers tend to do better since dinner ladies see themselves *in loco uxoris*. There is anyway a commonly held belief that men need more food than women, just as they used to need more pay. Long-serving male teachers, regarded as war veterans, do best of all.

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ANOTHER WONDERFUEL YEAR: EVEN MORE PEOPLE PREFER GAS

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From the Annual Report and Accounts of the British Gas Corporation 1984/5 available from H.M.S.O., price £2.00. Further information from the Public Relations Department, British Gas Corporation, Rivermill House, 152 Grosvenor Road, London SW1V 3JL.

People prefer gas–and Britain benefits

BRITISH GAS

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This is your basic, Class I duty: there are many others, depending on the school; 'voluntary' library duties, for example. Here up to 100 pupils at a time may suddenly develop a hithero non-existent interest in the written word (particularly on wet days) and the serried ranks of shelves act as screens for romantic assignations, card games, reading of forbidden magazines and activities I would rather not mention here.

But the Inland Revenue has been properly briefed — they know where teachers stand. Unlike most 'professions' there are hardly any expenses that can be offset against tax. A car is not deemed 'necessary' though with piles of books to carry home it is difficult to manage without. Those employed in higher education can claim for books: not so ordinary teachers for whom all 'necessary' books are 'supplied by the authority'.

Professional actors can claim for theatre tickets; teachers of Drama or English even of 'A' level courses cannot. There is no such thing as a clothes allowance, even though school furniture seems designed to snag tights and you need protective clothing against the chalk dust and missiles. Besides which, many teachers have two wardrobes, since Heads can be remarkably fanatical about what they do, or do not, approve.

There are, of course, supportive, caring Heads, but when it comes to the crunch, as it has recently, they admit that their allegiance lies with the children, or anyway, the education authority or their own 'professional status'. Kids are canny: they recognise this and know how easy it is to play on fear of disapproval from On High, which if Bash Street can be trusted, surpasses their own. For instance, one disagreeable aspect of the jobs (*never* mentioned in teacher training) is having to listen to the foulest of foul language and being subjected to bad-smell making contests. One teacher complained bitterly, adding that the euphemism 'breaking wind' was hardly in keeping with the crudity of the offence for which the word 'fart' was more fitting. Before 9 am the following day, she was summoned to the Head's office and asked to account for her 'bad language' in class, following a complaint from a parent. She got off lightly (it is always better to confess, my girl) with a reprimand; corporal punishment having been banned in most counties.

So why does anybody do it? No one is forced to become a teacher. By far the largest proportion of the teaching force is female. Many entered teaching 20 years ago, when University Appointments Boards had little else to suggest. It is still one of the few jobs where women can be available to their children, a convenience many women both care about and desperately need, for want of any provision.

Teaching was also once regarded as a valued profession, attracting idealists when education was seen as the key to economic and cultural progress. Now the depths to which morale has sunk is only recognised or acknowledged by those within. Teachers, on the whole, are a gallant band, who soldier on against increasing odds: when the last remaining incentive for pupils to show some sort of co-operation or respect, the prospect of a job, is fast becoming a mirage. □

Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

'WE ARE THE MASTERS NOW!'

Forty years ago today, Labour, led by Clem Attlee (above), heard it had won a landslide majority and could try to reshape the post-war world. But the day itself had none of the promise later written into it. MARTIN LINTON describes it

WHEN THE tellers started to count at 9 am on 26 July 1945, they were almost the only people in the United Kingdom who had any inkling of the political avalanche that was about to be unleashed. They had already opened the ballot boxes on the day before to add in the service vote and to check the number of ballot papers. They must have gained some impression of the vote then but they kept it to themselves.

The ballot boxes had already kept their secret for three weeks as the armed services ballot papers were collected from every corner of the world. But not even the politicians had guessed what was coming. Their memoirs and diaries have shown them to be quite unprepared. Churchill had told the King on the 25th that he expected a Tory majority of 30 to 80. Attlee had told Molotov a few days earlier at the Potsdam talks that he expected 'either a small Tory majority or a deadlock'. The press all expected a Tory majority and even the ILP's paper, the *New Leader*, forecast 'a slight majority' for the Tories.

The tellers started to count at a brisk pace, their job made easier because the ballot papers had been checked the day before. The first result was due at Salford South, a Conservative seat at 10am but it came at 9.43. It was won by Labour with a majority of 4,791. Soon after 10 am the other two Salford seats declared. They were both Labour gains and both on swings of more than 10 per cent. At 10.25 the first Tory minister was defeated, Harold Macmillan at Stockton-on-Tees, and at about 10.40 the most extraordinary results started to come in from Birmingham, the city of Neville Chamberlain. Labour had taken Ladywood on a swing of 28 per cent and Sparkbrook on 30 per cent, swings that are still among the highest ever recorded.

Anyone with a slide rule or a swingometer could have guessed by 10.30 that Labour had not only won, but had won by a landslide. But hardly anyone knew what the results were. The radio results service did not begin until 11 am on the Forces' Network, at 12 noon on the BBC Home Service and there was no television coverage at all.

Attlee was in Limehouse Town Hall in London's East End, where his own count was proceeding very satisfactorily but he had no idea what was happening elsewhere. He was returned with 84 per cent of the vote. At 11.30 his wife, Vi, took him in their family saloon car not to Transport House but to Waterloo station, where they met their daughter Alison who was coming home from school for the summer holidays.

He did not hear of Labour's victories until he arrived at Transport House soon after 12, just as the public were beginning to learn the results on the 12 o'clock news or the early editions of the evening papers. 'Evening newspapers were snatched and read by groups and at first it was astonishment, rather than triumph or despair, that was registered. Clearly,' said the *Guardian*, 'nobody expected it quite like that.'

The newspaper's staff had the opportunity to observe the public's reaction from the people who gathered outside their Manchester office. 'In Cross Street a large crowd waited about all day, listening to the results. Some 50 or 60 results had been announced before a cheer was raised. Stafford Cripps produced the first ripple of excitement. His return to Parliament was greeted by a burst of applause, which soon tailed off into an almost shamefaced silence.

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'The defeat of Mr Duncan Sandys called forth an unusually loud cheer and the defeat of Major Randolph Churchill and Captain Julian Amery at Preston was only a shade less popular. The failure of Mr Bernard Bracken called forth one of the biggest cheers of the day. From that point on the crowd seemed to have found its voice.'

THERE WERE no crowds yet at Transport House, although people were now hearing results on the wireless sets that could have left them in doubt about the size of Labour's triumph. Labour won Winchester. Labour won Wimbledon. Labour won Taunton. Labour won St Albans. Labour won Sudbury in Suffolk. Labour won Stroud in Gloucestershire. Labour won Wycombe, Bucks. And after several recounts Labour won the constituency of Cambridgeshire with a majority of 44, a seat which the Tories held with a majority of 23,289 in 1979.

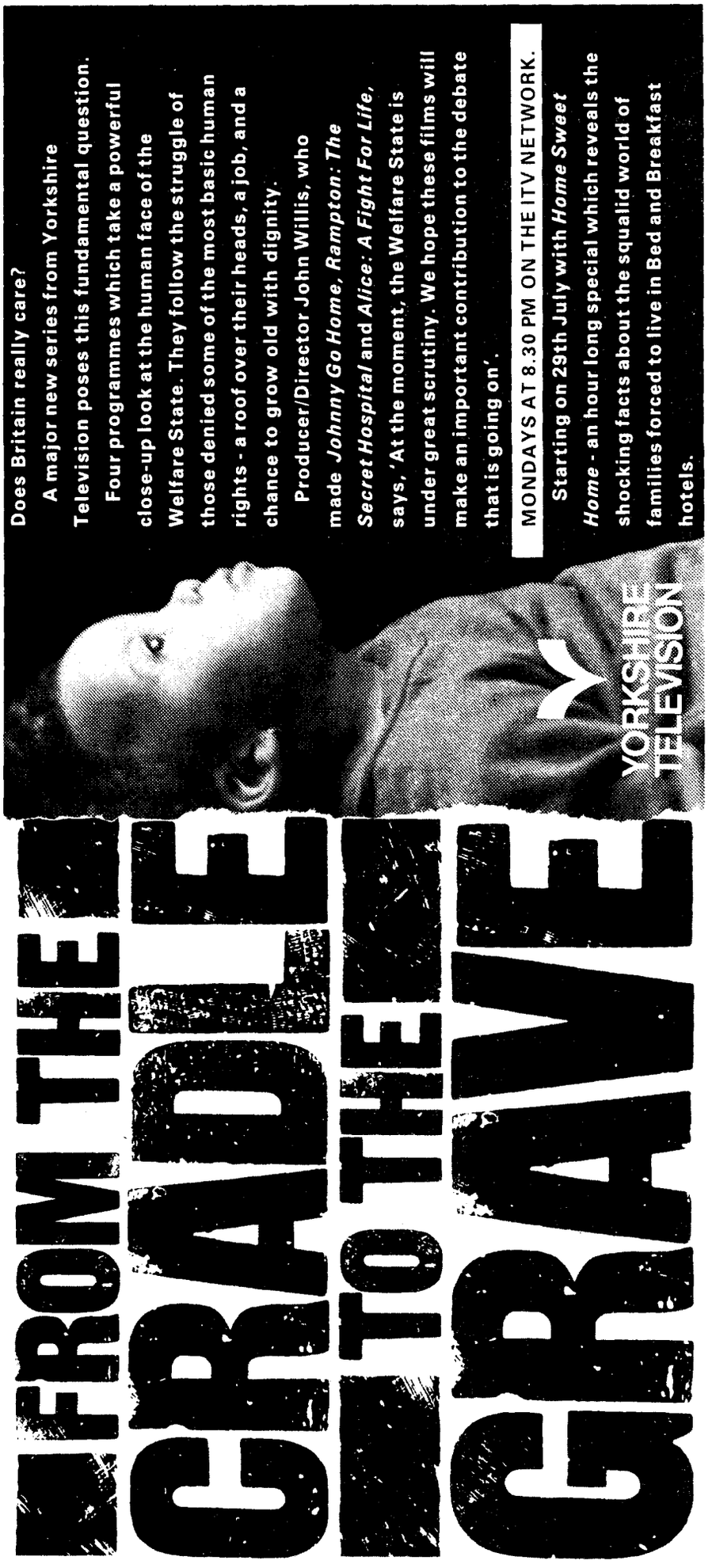
Inside Transport House Attlee, Bevin and Morrison, the three dominant figures in the party were engaged in a battle over what Attlee should do when the King asked him to form a government. Morrison argued that Attlee should not accept the invitation until the new parliamentary Labour Party had met to elect its leader, an election in which Morrison made it clear he intended to stand. Attlee said that this was 'cockeyed' under both the constitution of the Labour Party and the constitution of the country. If the King asked him to form a government, he would not say 'I'll let you know later'.

Morrison knew, however, that he had the support of Laski and others in his constitutional case for a leadership election. The telephone rang in an adjoining room. Morrison was called to answer it. It was Sir Stafford Cripps offering Morrison his support for the 'constitutional' case. But while Morrison was out of the room, Bevin turned to Attlee and said: 'Clem, you go to the Palace straight away'. Nothing was said when Morrison came back into the room and he never knew that Attlee had gone to the Palace until it was far too late.

Churchill had been supremely confident that he would still be Prime Minister after the election, either in a Conservative or a Coalition government. But when he saw the size of his defeat, he thought it best to wait no longer. He conceded defeat in a letter to Attlee at 3.30 that afternoon. Attlee, wearing red and yellow paper flowers in his buttonhole, appeared for the newsreels on the steps of Transport House. 'Heads appeared at windows,' said the *Guardian*. 'But there were no crowds yet. The triumph was still quite an intimate affair.'

Not long after this Attlee left Transport House for the Great Western Hotel at Paddington, where he had tea with Vi and his daughters, Janet, Felicity and Alison, as guests of Lord Portal, chairman of the Great Western Railway. Churchill went to the Palace to hand in his resignation at 7pm and when the King summoned Attlee, there was a panic at Transport House while they could not find him. At last they tracked him down and Vi drove him straight from Paddington to the Palace.

THUS THE moment that must be counted as the dawn of socialism in the post-war world was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a rather prosaic affair. The weather certainly did not enhance it. Far from being a 'blissful dawn' as Michael Foot called it, it was actually a Thursday afternoon and it was raining hard as Attlee's family saloon entered the gates of the Palace. Vi waited outside in the car as Clem went in to see the King. He recalled later that 'the King pulled my leg a bit. He told me I looked more surprised by the result than he felt.'

From the Palace Vi drove him to a victory celebration at Central Hall, Westminster, for word had spread now and there were 3,000 jubilant Labour supporters inside the hall and another 2,000 outside. They cheered for 5 minutes when he arrived.

Attlee's speech was movingly simple. He looked back to the early days of the labour movement and thought of those unknown comrades who had toiled in dark days when there was little hope of achievement, but whose faith had carried them through. He wondered what they would have thought and what Keir Hardie would have thought if they could have shared in their moment of triumph.

They all joined in the singing of the anthem by that great socialist, Edward Carpenter, that seemed to have been written with that very day in mind:

> England arise! the long, long night is over,
> Faint in the east behold the dawn appear;
> Out of your evil dream of toil and sorrow,
> Arise, O England, for the day is here.

Attlee then called on a small gathering at the Fabian Society before retiring to his home at Stanmore. He heard the last result declared at 10 pm, which gave Labour 393 seats in the House against 213 for the Conservatives and 12 for the Liberals. He wrote in his diary that it had been 'quite an exciting day'.

A week later, the new MPs met for the first time. The Tory MPs burst into song to greet their leader, Winston Churchill, with a chorus of 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow'. The tribunes of the people could not be restrained. As the *Guardian*'s parliamentary correspondent wrote: 'Up the new men rose. Fresh from the platform they burst out singing the Red Flag. All the serried ranks were standing, except one: the Ministers on the Treasury bench. Where shall we find decorum if not here? Two verses of the anthem, each followed by a round of cheers and honour had been satisfied.'

Hugh Dalton wrote in his memoirs: 'That first sensation, tingling and triumphant, was of a new society to be built; and we had power to build it. There was exhilaration among us, joy and hope, determination and confidence. We felt exalted, dedicated, walking on air, walking with destiny. A loud cry broke from one of our new boys, now both to Parliament and to office. "We are the masters now!" It was the voice of Hartley Shawcross.'

There is some dispute about what he actually said and some regret that it should have been he who said it in view of his subsequent political gyrations which once earned him the name Shortley Floorcross. But there is no doubt it summed up the spirit of triumph that stayed with the new government for a long time. As the *Guardian* said on the following day: 'Britain has undergone a silent revolution. Few suspected it. Hardly a politician ventured to forecast it. But it is the kind of progressive opportunity that comes only once in every few generations.' □

John Smith/IFL

LABOUR TURNS ITS BACK ON KNIGHT'S LAST STAND

Round two of the ratecapping struggle opens this week with the government's unveiling of environment minister Patrick Jenkin's hit list for the next financial year. But Labour councillors are still trying to deal with the unfinished business of why this year's campaign went wrong, as well as what to do when the GLC and the metropolitan counties go. JOAN SMITH and FRANCIS WHEEN report

ONE OF THE more remarkable sights of last weekend's conference organised by the Local Government Information Unit in Manchester was that of Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth Council (above), engaged in apparently comradely conversation with Jack Dromey, National Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, on Friday evening. Only minutes earlier, in the echoing splendour of Manchester Town Hall, Knight had denounced Dromey by implication if not by name. And only a few minutes before that, Dromey had denounced Knight, again by implication.

Yet there the two men were, chatting away as though nothing had happened. Ted Knight knows that, whether he likes it or not, he will need union money to pay for his court appeal against the District Auditor's surcharge notice on Lambeth councillors. On the other side, union leaders like Dromey realise that — again whether they like it or not — their members' interests are best served by supporting any Labour council, rather than letting the Tories in.

However, although these facts of life may mean that union officers and Labour councillors are obliged to maintain some sort of working relationship, it became clear at Manchester that there is little love lost between the two groups. NALGO officials continually criticised councillors for back-sliding in the struggle against rate-capping and abolition; Labour councillors were so irritated by these strictures that more than one retorted that he didn't need lessons in socialist purity from people whose union was not even affiliated to the Labour Party. Some unionists gave the impression that they believed that the only function of local councils was to employ people, without regard to the type and quality of service.

Still, although the trade unionists' complaints often seemed unfair, some of their ciriticisms of Labour councils had merit. Jack Dromey's speech may have offended Ted Knight, but it ensured that the conference opened in a spirit of brutal honesty. The campaign against ratecapping, he said baldly, had been 'a fiasco which created bitter divisions in our own ranks and left Patrick Jenkin laughing.' It had been a mistake, he said, to impose the same tactic — not setting a rate — on both the upper and lower tier authorities. 'Some groups in local government', he went on, 'created a climate in which to doubt the wisdom of that tactic was to betray socialism.'

THAT CLIMATE was obnoxious to many delegates. Graham Stringer, leader of Manchester City Council, said his council had been worried about hosting the event because of 'the mayhem that had happened in London'. Keva Coombes, leader of Merseyside, said he was fed up with 'the poisonous atmosphere still existing in London'. But it is infectious: Liverpool councillors flared up when faced by some low-key criticism from Andy Pott of Avon. They were prepared to listen to criticism only in private, one of them said. The message from Liverpool, she added, was 'Keep your mouth shut. That's the minimum we demand of people, that we are not criticised while we're in the front line.'

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Nevertheless, the overall mood of the conference was honest and reflective. The myths which bedevilled the first year's campaign against ratecapping were, for the most part, squarely faced. It is now clear that 1985 is not the crunch year for all the councils; some leaders who were predicting huge job losses and cuts in services are now having to explain to their electorates that they can, by one means or another, get through after all. Phil Turner, leader of Camden, admitted that he did not know Camden's exact financial position. He thought the borough had run out of creative accounting schemes, he said, but 'I can't be certain'.

The apparent success of creative accounting even prompted a delegate from Haringey to ask the unthinkable: 'If by those means you can defend jobs and services at their present level', he asked, 'what are you going to campaign about?'

TACTICS FOR the rate-capping battle had been developed in the year of the miners' strike, and councillors had found themselves opening up a second front in an all-out offensive against the government. Like the miners, they lost, not least because the political tactic — a universal refusal to set a rate — was undermined by the different rules for the two tiers of local government, and by the loopholes which their finance officers could understand and exploit.

It has left the councils fighting on different ground. Lambeth and Liverpool have already been surcharged and face High Court battles with the District Auditor. Edinburgh has rejected a default notice. Merseyside has a rate but no budget. Sheffield and Leicester may well run out of money towards the end of the financial year.

What happens to these councils may provide the answer to a stark but rarely articulated question: is there *any* effective means of opposing the 1984 Rates Act other than further attempts at creative accounting? While it was positive at last weekend's conference to ask the question, the councillors themselves, constrained by council chambers and committee rooms, could think of few answers. Chris King, a former Islington councillor, suggested one: 'The only way out of this is to return a Labour government', he said.

As if rate-capping weren't enough, there is now another issue which seems likely to set Labour councils against one another (and against the unions). The Bill abolishing the GLC and the Metropolitan Counties passed through its final stages last week, and a few optimistic souls had hoped that the Manchester conference would give the counties a chance to agree on a common strategy. Instead, the weekend showed that each of the doomed councils will go its own way.

Suspicion and hostility between the Met Counties is matched by their mistrust of the Metropolitan Districts which will take over some of their functions. The leader of Merseyside County Council, Keva Coombes, condemned the district councils for their 'rush to co-operate with the government'. David Blunkett revealed that Sheffield is the only district in South Yorkshire which is still not co-operating with the plans for abolition.

But is a policy of total non-co-operation such a good idea? It has its supporters, of course, particularly among NALGO officials, one of whom helpfully said that anyone who co-operated with the bodies that will take over counties' functions after abolition would be 'just as bad as anyone who co-operated with the Nazis in the last war'. The GLC was criticised for adopting a rather more muted policy of partial co-operation.

Ken Livingstone was not present to defend or explain the GLC's position, but Michael Ward of the council's Industry and Employment Committee pointed out that there would be 'no *general* move towards co-operating with the government or providing information'. The council would, however, encourage Labour councillors to participate in the new joint board which will run London's fire service. This was partly because the Fire Brigades Union wanted Labour councillors to join in, but also because at least the board would not be an out-and-out quango. The one point on which almost all councillors seem to agree at the moment is that nobody should have anything to do with bodies whose members are appointed by central government.

Michael Ward was contemptuous of those who simply repeated the parrot-cry of 'non-co-operation'. He said that the GLC and the Met Counties would be abolished on April Fool's day next year, come what may. 'Non-co-operation ends on 31 March. We shall be out on that day, we shall have no further status. We can non-co-operate till the cows come home up to 31

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March, but there ain't going to be anything for us to non-co-operate about by then. It's time we worked out strategies that don't rely on mock heroics.'

Talk of mock heroics inevitably brings one back to Ted Knight, without whom no gathering of this kind would be complete. On Friday night he popped up to make a Live Aid-style appeal for cash to fight off the District Auditor, saying that 'we don't apologise for being here because we carried out party policy'. Knight, at least, seems to see no need for reassessment of the 'no rate' policy or anything else. His newspaper, *Labour Herald*, ran a front-page editorial last week whose headline alone makes it a collector's item, since all the rebel councils have now set a rate. 'No Rate Is Still Right' thundered the *Herald*. And ever more shall be so, no doubt. □

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□Wanted: 8 authentic Japanese Equity members to work on BBC2 serial 'Heart of the Country'. One problem. All these Japanese ladies and gentlemen should be over 35. And live in the area of Shepton Mallet. — *Daily Mirror* quoting *The Stage* (Mrs. H. Simons)

□Firemen in Cheltenham had a prickly problem today when a hedgehog fell into a disused toilet and got stuck in the U-bend. Wildlife rescue experts tried to prise it out but could not get a grip because of the prickles. They called in the fire brigade who smashed the toilet to free it. — *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* (George Moor)

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RAILWAYS

WAR OF ACRONYMY

After the miners, the rail unions are next. IAN WILLIAMS reports on the pre-fight warm-up

FOR THE last three weeks, railway drivers and guards across the country have been getting sent home by British Rail in a way which seems designed to provoke confrontation or capitulation from the unions. Following as it does the threat to sue the unions for a quarter of a million pounds over a strike in this year, and the recent unilateral withdrawal from the closed shop agreement, there can be little doubt that the Driving Cab of British Rail has been taken over by dogmatic Thatcherites.

Last week's court writ against the boycotting of privately built railbuses while railway workshops are threatened with closure in itself is going to provoke confrontation, since the NUR is going to stick to its decision whatever the judiciary say.

BR's latest campaign against the unions is being waged in a welter of acronyms, DOOF (Driver Only Operation, Freight), DOOP (ditto passenger), OMO (One Man Operation), OPO (the same but non-sexist) and even more ominously, lurking in the background as London Transport's contribution to the war on employment and safety, FACT (Fully Automatically Controlled Train).

What all but the last mean is the removal from the train of the guard. The surprise is, not that the issue should be coming up now, but that it has been delayed so long. It has its origins in 1982, when the unions were made to eat humble pie. In the NUR, there was tension with Weighell leaning to the Board, and an increasingly restive membership and executive wanting to know what the members were getting out of co-operation with BR's various productivity 'initiatives'. The answer was becoming clear: nothing. BR have invented a new term to put off claims for cash for union compliance in quitting loss-making activities like the parcels business. 'Negative Productivity' they call it.

The NUR had conference decisions against DOO, and even Sid Weighell had said 'Over My Dead Body'. But he persuaded the NUR's AGM to call off the national strike of 1982, on its first day, and to trust to the Board's 'reasonableness'. BR demonstrated this by challenging ASLEF to stake its virility on resisting Flexible Rostering. The resulting strike lasted weeks, and cost millions. Weakening ASLEF has been the Board's major investment.

In addition to ASLEF's acceptance of flexible rostering it had to examine 'Single-manning'. This is *not* the same as DOO (no guard) but the removal of the residual firemen's positions, now called secondmen, or Assistant Drivers.

Surprisingly, no productivity strings were attached to the 1984 and '85 pay deals, and both ASLEF and the NUR accepted them with alacrity. The Board's restraint was presumably at the behest of the government which did not want a railway strike while the miners were out.

BR'S TARGETS are now to convert passenger services from King's Cross to Cambridge to OPO and freight services from Immingham to Stanton, Port Talbot to Margam, and Willesden to Liverpool. The Board has gone over the heads of the unions and approached local representatives directly, exploiting the 70-year old idiosyncrasies of the railway's negotiating machinery. But they wouldn't take no for an answer there either, and are now refusing to pay those who refuse to co-operate.

The first implication for the NUR is, of course, the loss of some 2000 freight guards' jobs, possibly followed by the loss of guards on suburban and commuter routes. For the public on suburban services, there will be no guard to deter vandalism or assaults which women and old people in particular fear when travelling late at night, especially with BR's policy of reducing staff at stations.

But far more lives are at risk from driver-error from flexible rostering. The Board refuses to discuss the safety aspects of DOO with the unions, claiming that it was just a stall to postpone introduction. The prospects of 1000-ton freight trains hurtling through the night at 75 miles per hour, dependent on the health and attention of one flexibly rostered driver do not inspire confidence.

In a railway collision, the person most at risk is, obviously, the driver. The guard is left with the responsibility of keeping damage to the minimum. Recently the volcano-like eruption of the burning oil train in the tunnel under the Pennines was mitigated by the whole train crew detaching intact tanks and pulling them away — impossible for one man. Also in the North West a guard has just had an award for rescuing passengers from the smoke-filled train. The driver was dead, incinerated by burning tanks.

BUT IT IS not only that trains will, whatever BR say, be less safe; taken in the light of BR's overall strategy, it is difficult not to assume that one of the reasons for pursuing the proposals, now the miners have gone back to work, is to weaken the unions in preparation for a programme of cut-backs. As Mick Hamer has pointed out consistently in the *New Statesman*, the Serpell Report on Railway Finances envisages a new round of Beeching style cuts.

BR's annual report, published last week, reveals that the Board's portion of the 'investment' in the miners' defeat is to be deducted from rail investment plans. Hence chairman Bob Reid's anxious warning in the report against the union's 'rearguard action against change'. For the Board, change equals cutting staff, with the aim not of improving the service but of meeting 'Financial Objectives'. This might be desirable if it was clear what they were; but they are as unapproachable as a mirage. To get near them is to watch them receding into the distance again the next year.

The railway unions are now paying lost wages for the staff sent home, and the NUR will this week decide whether to ballot 10,000 guards later in the summer for strike. ASLEF have done a creditable job in persuading their members not to co-operate, since they actually

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stand to gain over £7 a day for driving on their own, but they realise that DOO will be accompanied by one driver engines.

It is clear to all the unions that defeat on this will introduce 'managerial flexibility' on all the agreements they have. Following the workshop closures, defeat would be so demoralising that any resistance to future productivity deals, line or workshop closures would be much less likely. The Transport Secretary will imitate Walker's public Pontius Pilate act over the miners, while, reckless of public welfare or safety, privately encouraging the Board to go for a head-on collision.

The railworkers were on Ridley's 1978 hit list of unions to be scuppered and with the NUM out of the way, provocation of a national rail strike would suit the government's plans. Bob Reid and the railway Board seem happy to play the role of promoter for the fight. □

Ian Williams is a member of the NUR.

ARTLESS

ROLL UP, ROLL UP, PAY FOR YOUR ART

Lord Gowrie says charges will deter 'whimsical' use of culture. NORMAN BUCHAN reports

LAST MONTH, the Victoria and Albert museum quietly announced that it was introducing a policy of 'voluntary donation' for admission. It 'suggested' that the 'voluntary' donation be £2 for adults. Yet only a year earlier, the V&A's director, Sir Roy Strong, had described the National Maritime Museum's decision to introduce admission charges as 'symptomatic not only of a change in public mood and ideology but also indicative of what is to come in the next few years'.

Nearly all our great cultural institutions have had savage cuts in their acquisition grants, and watched the dilapidation of their buildings. The pressure on them to introduce charges — now greater since the V&A has broken ranks — was, wrote Roy Strong, 'a triumph of Thatcherite principles; that is you get what you pay for.'

Lord Gowrie, minister for the arts, expressed those values clearly when he encouraged libraries to charge for services. It is a statement of arch conservatism, that an inborn appreciation of 'culture' is what marks out the elite: 'If a charge is made,' he said, 'then the user will appreciate what he or she is getting, use will be restricted to those who really have an interest, rather than a whim, and extra resources are available for the service as a whole.'

It is the kind of classic trinity of reaction in this field. Everything is wrong about it. To claim more satisfaction because you pay for it is almost a second prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages. But to add that it is somehow good to restrict entry only to those [illegible] really have an interest rather than a whim [illegible] cks stone dead the possibility of building up new and bigger audiences. Of course a young person's involvement is first triggered off by a whim — which then leads to an interest, and often, later, to a permanent subject engagement.

Admission charges prevent that process. The regular but rich will continue. The regular but poor cannot. The new and accidental 'entry on a whim' will cease. This is not mere speculation. It happened under Mrs Thatcher before, when she introduced museum charges as Secretary of State for Education in 1974. The results were appalling in all the galleries and museums involved. At the V&A, attendance dropped from 107,981 in February 1973 to 52,278 in February 1974. For the same months, the drop was from 239,147 to 129,054 for the Science Museum, from 22,544 to 12,742 for the National Portrait Gallery, and so on.

Sir Roy Strong assures us that the £2 'suggested' will be voluntary. Has he ever visited the Metropolitan Museum in New York with the 'voluntary' charge? Even he would require a hide like a rhinoceros to refuse payment.

Roy Strong was right last year. It is ideological; it is a triumph of crude Thatcherite principles; and it is shameful in the extreme. To beggar our national institutions and wait for their bailing out by the private sponsor is itself a sufficient humiliation. But the imposition of charges which will restrict young entrants is a kind of sterilising of the seed corn of our civilisation. □

Norman Buchan is Labour's Shadow spokesman on the arts.

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

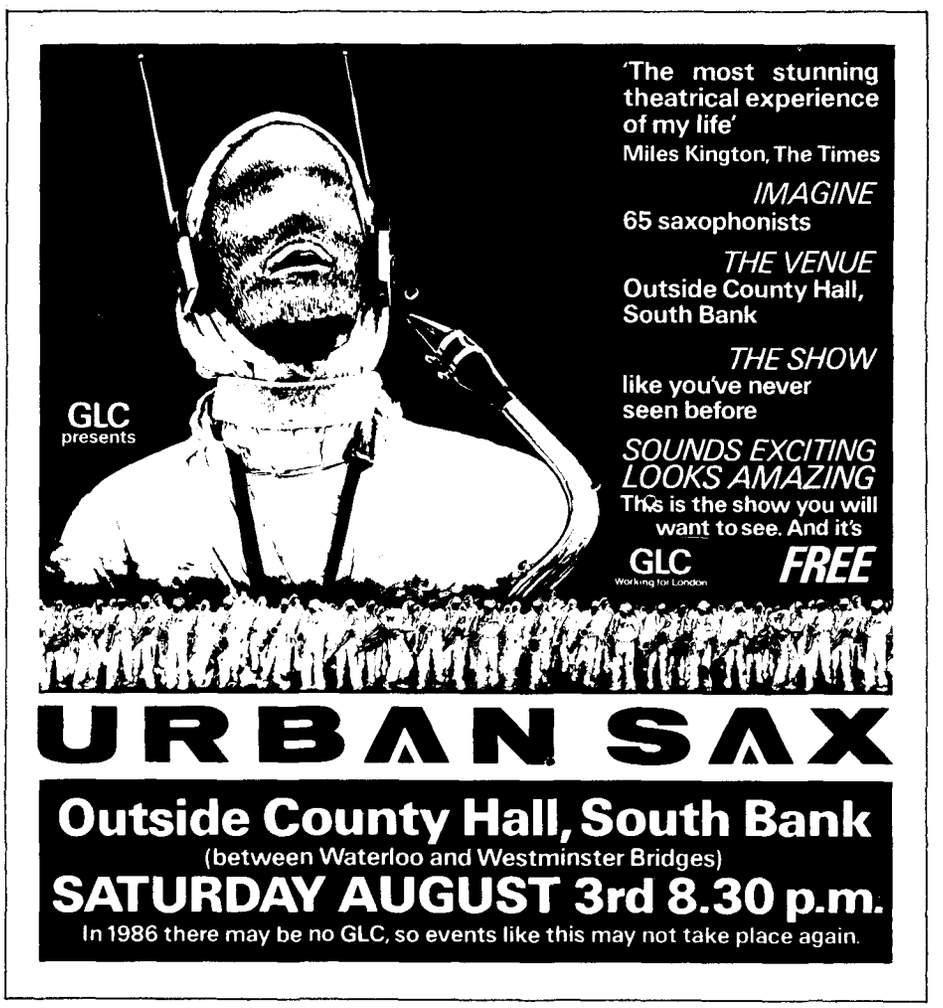
'DEMOCRACY? WE DON'T MEAN US'

Secret postal ballots are, the Tories insist, indispensable for trade union democracy. But all is not well in the voting life of their own party. RUPERT MORRIS reports on how Lady Elizabeth succeeded Major Trollope-Bellow

COMPLAINTS MADE to MP Tom King about the conduct of a ballot within the Bridgwater Conservative Association are still rumbling on in his Somerset constituency. The controversy will cause considerable embarrassment to Mr King who, as well as being Bridgwater's MP is Secretary of State for Employment and the man trying to get unions to take government money for secret ballots.

Several long-standing Conservatives have spoken of their misgivings about a selection meeting in May at which Lady Elizabeth Gass, a prominent landowner at the village of Stogursey, was selected to stand for the Quantock Division of Somerset County Council. The main complaints were that:

- Substantial numbers of paid-up members in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the division did not receive notice of the selection meeting last December.

● There were no checks on the door. Mrs Dinah Jeanes, the constituency chairperson, said she could not be 100 per cent certain that non-members had not been among those voting.

● There were only 60 ballot papers for more than 100 people present, and Mr Ken Thorne, the party agent, had to make impromptu ballot forms.

● Votes were counted privately by the chairperson and the agent, and the voting figures were not given, despite a request from the floor of the meeting.

● The Rules of Bridgwater Constituency Conservative Association bear little relation to the procedure followed, which was left to the discretion of the chairperson, Mrs Jeanes.

Mr Peter White, a farmer from Nether Stowey, who had been urged to put his name forward by the retiring councillor, Major Thomas Trollope-Bellow, expected a handful of delegates to be present. When he saw more than 100 crammed into the hall he was flabbergasted. 'It was like going back to mediaeval days' he said. 'The room was full of Lady Gass's tenants and members of staff'. 'I think this sort of thing', he added, 'is an insult to the party'.

Mrs Diane Branch, a lifelong Conservative, was so disgusted that she wrote to Mr King. In his reply, Mr King offered a new definition of criteria for democratic elections: the procedure used, he said, was perfectly satisfactory 'provided those responsible for the election are responsible people'. Mrs King's specific complaint was of the failure to give election figures. This, said Mr King, 'is to avoid embarrassment that may be caused by particular people getting disappointing results.'

This did not satisfy Mrs Branch or Mrs Lillian Cartwright, the third disappointed candidate. 'If you are a fit candidate for the county council, then have to be adult enough not to get silly and upset if you do badly' said Mrs Cartwright.

CHAIRPERSON Mrs Jeanes said in retrospect that she wished she had announced in advance that the voting figures would not be given. Withholding the results is in fact normal practice. As for notice of the meeting, Mrs Jeanes said that all four branches involved had been informed, and it was up to the branches to let individual members know. She said the shortage of ballot papers was simply the result of an unexpectedly large turnout.

The rules of the Association do not, in fact, specify election procedures as they assume the role of the members is to approve a candidate who is nominated first by the branch committee or committees who then recommends them to a standing committee which then, if it approves the candidate, 'presents' him or her to the branch for adoption. Where, as in this case, more than one branch is involved, the branches concerned are supposed to follow the same procedure, acting jointly.

None of this happened. The three candidates simply contacted the agent of the Association and were then presented to the meeting which, for lack of any written rules on the conduct of elections, followed the guidance of the chair. □

Rupert Morris is a staff reporter on The Times.

Murder in a blaze of prejudice

Paul Foot

TWO WOMEN died last week from fires which seem to have been started deliberately in their homes at night, while they slept. Both these outrages were reported, though there was a subtle difference in the reporting.

On Thursday last, the papers chose the death of Jean Gidman as one of their main stories. Mrs Gidman died when her semi-detached house in Biddulph, Staffs, caught fire. Initial inquiries suggested that the fire had been started deliberately.

What roused the interest of the popular press was that Mrs Gidman's husband had gone back to work at Florence colliery in the middle of the miners' strike. On its front page (on a day packed with big stories) the *Mirror* had: *REBEL* MINER'S WIFE DIES IN ARSON ATTACK. The *Sun*, the *Star* and the *Mail* had the story on page two, the *Express* as a page lead on page 15. The *Sun* had: FIREBUG KILLS PIT *REBEL* WIFE; the *Express*: FIREBUG KILLED WIFE OF PIT STRIKE *REBEL*; the *Star*: PIT *REBEL* WIFE MURDER PROBE (my emphasis). The *Mail* had a bland enough headline — MINER'S WIFE MURDERED — but the first paragraph made it clear what its editorial chiefs thought was important. 'A murder inquiry was under way last night after the wife of a miner *who worked through the pit strike* died in a blaze at her home'.

Similarly, the first paragraph of the *Sun* story: 'The wife of a miner *who worked during the pit strike* was killed by a firebug yesterday'.

And the *Mirror*: 'The wife of a miner *who worked through the pit strike* died in an arson blaze yesterday' (my emphasis).

It was not the story of the murder of a woman but of the wife of a miner. This 'fact' about the strike spiced the murder story with an appetising innuendo. If the wife of a miner who defied the strike had been killed by arson, was she not, perhaps, just possibly, if not as near as dammit certainly, done to death by one of Scargill's hooligans?

Just in case a dull reader might not get the point, some of the papers rammed it home. The *Mirror* quoted 'police' as saying: 'We have not ruled out the possibility it was connected with the miners' strike'.

Of course the day after the horror detectives were not going to rule anything out, and if asked if they were going to rule something out would certainly answer 'no'. And of course it *was* (and is) a possibility that the strike had something to do with the murder. Were the papers justified, however, in highlighting that possibility above all others?

On the evidence which they themselves provided, no they were not. A neighbour of the Gidmans was quoted in the *Express* as saying: 'There are hundreds of miners on the estate — miners who worked, miners who were on strike, miners who were both. But there was never any ill-feeling or trouble'. Brian Gidman was on strike at Florence pit at the beginning of the strike, and then went to work, as did the majority in Staffordshire.

Last Friday's *Guardian* and *Telegraph* quoted Det. Chief Supt. Peter Broomhill of the Staffordshire police as saying: 'There is no evidence to suggest any connection with the mining dispute'. None of the five papers quoted above could find space for that.

Now consider the other fire, which killed Shamira Kassan and her three small sons in their house at Ilford. This was dealt with by the Sunday papers on 14 July. The *Observer* in a strong and powerful story (which was not given the space or prominence it deserved) showed that the arson may have had 'racial motives'. The *Observer* quoted case after case of racial harassment in East London over the past few weeks, quoting one Asian Monitoring Project organiser in Newham as saying: 'The last seven weeks have become a diary of despair'.

The *evidence* and the *social background*, therefore, suggested a racial motive for the arson. Yet the popular papers took pains to distance themselves from so rushed a conclusion. The *Sunday Mirror* quoted police saying the fire might have been meant for a previous occupant of the house. The *Mail on Sunday* found some 'distraught relatives' who thought it was all a case of 'mistaken identity'. The *Sunday Express* reported the death baldly, without mentioning any possible cause. The *News of the World* suggested cautiously: 'The motive for the blaze is not known. But one theory is race hate'.

Precisely when the evidence did suggest a motive for the fire, and precisely where some sort of shock-horror campaigning coverage was called for, most papers withdrew into a cocoon of 'responsible reporting' refusing even to guess as to why such an outrage had occurred. Yet as soon as there came a chance to blame a very similar outrage on striking miners, responsibility and caution were thrown to the winds.

Just one more thing. One the day Jean Gidman died, 14 miners were acquitted of riot at Orgreave during the strike last summer. This was an historic judgment, and a terrible indictment of the South Yorkshire police. The trial had cost £500,000. Quite a story, you would think. Anyway, on any count, a better story than a half-baked hunch about an arson case in Staffordshire. So how did the five big-circulation papers, which dealt so extensively with Jean Gidman's death, handle the Orgreave story?

The *Mirror* reported it in three small pars on page 2 at the end of the Gidman story. The *Star* in three pars on page 2, the *Express* and *Sun* took an entirely fresh approach. They left the story out altogether. □

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DIARY

Peter Kellner

Moscow

I think it was Malcolm Muggeridge who said that the most important impressions you receive of a country are the things you see and hear during the first half-hour. Everything after that confirms or adjusts the initial mental framework you have, however subconsciously, constructed; but the framework remains. Perhaps some wily Russian had read Muggeridge (or whoever it was) and applied the lesson; just 15 minutes after leaving the airport for the centre of Moscow you see, to the right of the road, a monument consisting of three giant cross-type anti-tank emplacements. The place marks the limit of the Germans' advance in 1941: you realise with a jolt that your aircraft may have landed at Moscow's main international airport, but your first steps have been on soil that for a few weeks 44 years ago was behind German lines. It is a commonplace to observe the Soviet Union's continuing obsession with Germany; but the simple, stark reminder of how close the Wehrmacht came to Moscow still comes as a shock to visitors — at least to this visitor. I guess it is meant to.

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Actually, if you take the first-half-hour theory literally, your mental framework for assessing any new country is provided by the airport itself. I was disappointed by Moscow's: there is nothing Russian about it. Designed by West Germans — and the statistical probability is that some of those Germans were the children of soldiers who had made the same journey the hard way — it looks exactly like any modern airport anywhere in the world. Right down to the illuminated invitations to buy Camel cigarettes and Havana cigars, and the assurance that 'your Access Card will be honoured throughout the USSR'. A couple of days later I was conjuring with the meaning of 'honoured' — are the peasants of Ural communes instructed in the precise form of genuflection required when confronted with our flexible friend? — when my reveries were interrupted by the direct reality. The notice at the entrance to the better of our hotel restaurants read: 'Customers paying by credit card will be served first'. So *that's* how the Russians 'honour' one of capitalism's most potent symbols: with preferential treatment that no one in the capitalist West would dare offer — or at least so publicly.

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Moscow's airport may look anonymous, but its underground system certainly does not. You've probably read about how clean, swift and attractive it is. Do not be misled: it's far better than that. Our hotel was five miles from the city centre; the metro journey (cost: 5p) took just 11 minutes. The same distance journey in London takes 20. At the front of each platform are two digital displays. One shows the time, the other how many minutes and seconds have elapsed since the last train left. On average I found that the next train arrived at the station just one minute 15 seconds later — even at 11pm. There is no litter anywhere — a modest manifestation, perhaps, of the way Russians instinctively keep their eyes on each other; but also a reflection of the fact that smoking — and therefore used matches, cigarette-ends and cellophane wrappers — has *never* been permitted on Moscow's public transport.

But most striking of all are the works of art — mosaics, statues, stained glass windows, ornamental light fixtures and so on — that adorn the system, especially the circle line. I have a modest theory why this Metro art is so much more pleasing than almost any other post-revolutionary Moscow artefact. Everywhere else, size has been employed as a substitute for beauty, but underground on the Metro they couldn't use bigness to distract from ugliness. So the designers and sculptors *had* to produce art that was aesthetically attractive. And they did.

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And another thing about the metro. Although it was usually crowded, someone — often a number of people — *always* stood to let my wife or me sit down with our four-year-old boy. Similarly, men *always* stood to make way for Moscow women of a certain age and size, which meant a lot of men standing for a lot of women. No, please don't accuse me of being sexist (or size-ist); I merely observe and report what I saw.

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Our son, in fact, was the reason we were in Moscow at all. He is extremely short-sighted and Moscow is the place to go if you want to consult the world's most advanced eye surgeons. Yes, honestly: most people to whom I have said this reply 'no!' or 'gosh', as if the nation that put the first human being in space is unable to lead the West in eye microsurgery. But it does. Outside the institute where the work is done are pot-holes, broken-down buses, lorries belching fumes and making the most unhealthy noises — all the signs, in fact, of bureaucratic and mechanical inefficiency — but inside are dedicated doctors with wondrous machines that no other country can match. I was going to say 'that no other country uses', but that is not strictly true; for the institute licenses its technology to the West, and earns the Soviet Union considerable amounts of hard currency. The current ambition of the institute's director, Svyatoslav Fyodorov, is to make spectacles obsolete for adults; he has patented a new kind of silicon lens, weighing only five-thousandths of a gram, which can be permanently inserted in the eye replacing both spectacles and contact lenses. If his invention is adopted in the West — and Professor Fyodorov was in Britain last month to launch a deal his institute has done with the British company Eurolens — then royalties (if *royal*ties is an ideologically sound word) on every implanted silicon lens will go to the USSR.

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Such operations, however, are for adults only: our son will need a different operation, so we are likely to take him back to Moscow. Normally one would not expect two journeys separated by a handful of months to reveal any significant changes in Soviet life. But I have my hopes. Mikhail Gorbachev is encouraging journalists to expose inefficiency and corruption as part of his drive to shake up the economy. The day our son had his consultation at the eye institute, for example, *Pravda* reported how the Vologda district of central Russia had better medical facilities for its cows than its people, and quoted doctors complaining how clinics had been closed without the promised new hospital opening. It will be intriguing to return to Moscow not just to find out what effect such exposés have — but also to find out what good journalists do when, like good journalists the world over, they are no longer satisfied simply to report *what* is wrong, but want to explore *why*. If they start having the freedom to provide honest answers to that question, then something really remarkable would be happening to Soviet life.

ROGER WODDIS

Sic transit Pretoria

'Black teenagers, primitive at best, have unleashed blind violence and destructiveness against anyone and anything to hand. . . White society and its employees in the black areas will respond with an iron fist.' — Daily Telegraph

It's time the blacks were taught a lesson,
The township dwellers shown who's boss;
And if they spurn, as they appear to,
The Christian values we adhere to,
They'll kneel before the crooked cross.

The velvet glove is long outmoded,
The fashion is the iron fist.
Be lenient now and suffer later,
With every priest an agitator
And every child a Communist.

There are a few resigned to slaughter,
And others who would rather live;
But those who think their mere existence
Depends on offering resistance
Are all too clearly primitive.

Low are the worms and low the comic
Who deals in dirt to raise a laugh,
And deep the bass voice of the cello,
But lowest is the well-bred fellow
Who runs the Daily Terrorgraph.

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AP

BOTHA GOES FOR THE ROOTS

PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK reports on who is prominent in the township uprisings — and who the police are gunning for in the State of Emergency

Johannesburg

WITHIN 48 HOURS of declaring a State of Emergency over vast areas of the country last week, the South African authorities had arrested 450 political activists — a large slice of the middle-level political leadership in the townships. Hundreds more are believed to have gone into hiding.

Most of those being held are from the civic organisations, and youth and student groups which have been the backbone of resistance in the townships for almost a year. These include the Congress of South African Students, the various youth congresses, civic organisations, women's groups, churches and an organisation of white sympathisers, the Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee. Nearly all are affiliated to the non-racial United Democratic Front (UDF), though a few are from the black exclusivist Azahian People's Organisation.

Even before this latest round up, nearly all of the UDF's top leadership were already in jail or restricted by bail conditions — including Albertina Sisulu and Archie Gumede, the presidents of the UDF; Terror Lekota, the UDF's publicity secretary; Thozamile Gqweta and Sisa Njikelana of the Allied Workers Union; and key leaders of the Transvaal Indian Congress and the Natal Indian Congress.

They are among 52 people facing charges of treason in three trials which have attracted international attention, while a total of 274 jailed people have appeared in court this month on political charges. If one includes the several hundred people in detention at the time of the emergency, a sizeable number of the internal anti-apartheid leadership were already jailed or restricted before 21 July.

WHAT MAKES THE current wave of arrests marginally different is that the police are gunning for the grassroots leadership, people with a low public profile whose political work is most crucial to the ongoing resistance in the townships. Busloads of mourners returning from the funeral of UDF leader Matthew Goniwe, who died in mysterious circumstances, were detained outside Johannesburg last Sunday, a number of them being singled out for arrest.

Soweto, July 1985: black South Africans are no longer prepared to be apartheid's passive victims

The UDF — a loose grouping of hundreds of civic, student, church and trade union groups — launched itself in August 1983, with both a high public profile as well as an intention to organise in the townships around opposition to the newly-introduced constitution. This development of organisation gave people a channel through which to vent their anger and frustration at numerous issues, including the basic bread-and-butter ones.

In August last year, on the eve of the elections for the 'coloured' and Indian parliaments — which were boycotted by the overwhelming majority of voters — almost the entire leadership of the UDF was detained. But that

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did not stop the unrest around the elections and the outbreak of township protest in Sebokeng on 3 September — the starting date of the present township rebellion.

It was clear then that the most important component of resistance was the grassroots organisation led by activists, particularly the youth. The students' congress, in particular, whose members have borne the brunt of state repression in the past year, was at the helm of the township insurrection.

Because one can go to jail for a long time for supporting the aims of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC), few activists publicly declared their allegiance. Many, though, have been getting bolder in recent months in utterances at funerals of unrest victims, the only public platforms for activists, which have now also been silenced by the State of Emergency.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the ANC and its broad aims have widespread support in the townships. The ANC's call for mass insurrection has been both a response as well as a spur to developments in the townships, which in some cases were already effectively ungovernable before the ANC made its call towards the end of last year.

The insurrection is in turn both a result of solid organisation as well as spontaneous outbursts of anger and frustration. Activists explain that central to the breaking up of state-imposed structures of controls is the setting up of alternative means of control by the anti-apartheid groups.

The arrests of a number of alleged activists, in terms of the draconian powers now granted to the police and army, could cause severe disruption to these organisations and lead to further chaos in the townships. But it is doubtful whether this could be called a victory for the public aims of President P. W . Botha, when he declared the State of Emergency.

He said its aim was to halt conditions of 'violence and lawlessness . . . In view of the prevailing conditions it is essential that the situation be normalised in such a way that the climate for continued dialogue in the interests of all people in the constitutional, economic and social fields is ensured.' Yet the leadership who are now arrested or dispersed were in the best position to impose discipline in the townships.

Dr David Webster, a University of the Witwatersrand social anthropologist, who has links with the UDF, says the locking up of the leadership is likely to give rise to more undisciplined, violent action. 'The leadership has been trying to stop people from burning informers and attacking homes. The arrests could escalate this kind of thing,' he says. Those UDF people still at liberty believe President Botha's motive was not simply to restore order, but to crack down on grassroots anti-apartheid organisation in the townships.

The weeks ahead will tell whether the extreme measures now in force will stop the rebellion for long. There has certainly been no let-up in the unrest this week, and many activists are known to have escaped the net. There is a seething climate of rebellion in the townships at the moment. Black South Africans are no longer prepared to be passive victims of apartheid, something which no State of Emergency can change. □

PORTUGAL

REBEL HERO IN MASS TRIAL

NICHOLAS BELL reports on an 'anti-terrorist' show trial

A REMARKABLE mass trial of 74 people accused of links with terrorism began in Portugal on 22 July. It was immediately adjourned until 7 October. That this is the day after the general election is peculiarly significant because among the defendants is Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, architect of Portugal's '25 April' revolution which overthrew the Salazar dictatorship in 1974. The adjournment will remove an embarrassing political trial from the run-up to the elections — and will remove Otelo from the political stage.

In the courtroom of what Portugal is calling 'the trial of the century', Otelo and the other defendants are separated off by large panes of glass, blocking their view of the court. The 'repenters', defendants turned informer, are separated from the others and will be joined by anyone else who decides to repent during the proceedings. Before making their own declaration, the defendants will be unable to hear what the others have said.

Other questionable judicial irregularities include the judge being none other than the examining magistrate who has led the investigation into the accused. Furthermore, there can be no appeal against his verdict.

The 74 are accused of links with FP-25 (Popular Forces 25), a mysterious organisation which has claimed responsibility for bomb attacks against big property and factory owners and recently against NATO installations. Prime Minister Mario Soares has used these bombings to evoke 'the spectre of terrorism'. The Public Prosecutor, meanwhile, has been trying for the last year to build a case — without any real evidence — to show links between FP-25 and the FUP, (United Popular Front), a party founded by Otelo, among others.

Few people believe that Otelo and his fellow detainees, who include Manuel Crespo, a worker-priest, and the Catholic trade unionist Maria Teresa Rosa, have had anything to do with terrorism. French Senator Bernard Parmentier, who went to Portugal on a European delegation of MPs in December, commented: 'I couldn't find anyone who did not consider absurd the idea that Otelo is involved in terrorism.'

The Portuguese have not forgotten that it was Otelo who, as a Lieutenant Colonel, succeeded in mobilising progressive elements in the military to launch a bloodless revolution. Since then, Otelo has repeatedly declared that neither he nor the FUP would use violence against an elected democratic government.

IT WAS in 1980, during the trial of 30 members of the PRP (Workers' Revolutionary Party) — also accused of terrorism — that the FP-25 first began its attacks. The two leaders of the PRP, Carlos Antunes and Isabel do Carmo, were sentenced to long prison sentences but later released, their conviction declared null and void by a higher court. Antunes and do Carmo wrote to a newspaper, voicing the thoughts of many Portuguese, that 'the FP-25 had been created by the police in order to justify anti-terrorist laws, to justify the anti-terrorist brigade and to eliminate the FUP.'

The activities of FP-25 have provided Mario Soares with the perfect argument for introducing draconian new security legislation and for branding progressive forces in Portugal as criminal. Warning that the 'State is unarmed and defenceless' Soares has decided to try and push through parliament an 'Internal Security and Civil Protection Bill' which is so repressive and which gives the police and army such extensive powers that it carries echoes of Salazar's fascist laws and notorious 'PIDE' security police.

The Bill, which has been approved by parliament in its first reading, would allow police to carry out house searches without a warrant or any concrete suspicion, open private mail, tap phones, expel foreigners, restrict the freedom of movement and the right to hold public meetings. It would further allow the use of the army and police to maintain 'normal provisions' and public transport during strikes. It would also create new permanent national and regional 'Internal Security and Civil Protection Councils', made up of representatives from government, the secret services, army, police and judicial services, thereby fully abandoning the traditional, democratic concept of the separation of powers.

It was in June 1984, just as discussion was developing about this highly controversial Bill, that Portugal's police launched its spectacular wave of arrests against alleged members of FP-25, as though to provide the proof that the country was at the mercy of a terrorist plot.

IT IS, HOWEVER, not against terrorists that Soares needs his Security Bill. For months Portugal's social problems have been growing to almost intolerable levels, while Soares clings to the coat-tails of private enterprise and the IMF. By accepting the IMF's usual draconian conditions, Soares has allowed Portugal to become the first European country to be a pawn to the Fund's economic dictatorship. Poverty has spread, and popular protest is held at bay through police repression.

His Industry Minister, Veiga Simao, who earlier served in Salazar's regime, has introduced legislation which permits employers in crisis to suspend employment contracts and to pay workers only two-thirds of their usual wages. Over 100,000 workers are no longer regularly receiving wage-packets. In the industrial region of Setubal increasing numbers of families are suffering from malnutrition, yet the government has approved massive increases in the price of bread, milk, water and transport.

In Southern Portugal the agrarian reform, one of the most remarkable achievements of the revolution, has come under increasing attack and numerous rural co-operatives in the Communist-dominated region of Alentejo have been forced to hand their lands back to large property owners. In protest, the trade union federation has organised demonstrations throughout the country.

It is precisely against an explosion of popular

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protest which could threaten his government that Soares needs to equip himself with a highly repressive security legislation. And Otelo de Carvalho is one of the few figures who could lead and galvanise popular opposition to his policies. The recent political void created by the withdrawal of the Social Democrats from Soares' coalition and the calling of general elections has only increased the urgency for some established Portuguese politicians (with the tacit complicity of others) to remove Otelo from the scene. □

DAM BURST

TRAGEDY REVEALS STATE GUILT

AMANDA MITCHISON on how Italy's 'natural' disasters could be prevented

THE TRAGIC DAM collapse in the Dolomite Val Di Stava, which killed over 200 people in an avalanche of mud, has brought to light a horrifying story of bureaucratic neglect at a local and national level. While it is the firms involved which will most probably receive the brunt of national wrath, it has also highlighted the almost total lack of responsibility of the state authority in preventing such tragedies in an area of frequent 'natural' disasters.

Although a commission of inquiry is already underway, and public officials and others are under judicial investigation, certain details, such as when and how the dam was last inspected, remain suspiciously unavailable to the press.

However, records of town council meetings, and investigations by the Italian Green Party, demonstrate that leaks in the dam, and nearby subsidence had been arousing concern since last autumn. Labourers who worked on the dam also spoke of poor maintenance, leaking and the appearance of ominous water wells, which were not given due attention by the proprietors, Giulio and Aldo Rota and the mining company Prealpi Mineraria.

DESPITE COMPLAINTS of environmental damage, pollution of the river below, and Prealpi Mineraria's failure to carry out promised reforestation in the Val Di Stava, the local council of Treviso had approved plans to enlarge the dam's capacity, on condition that the company continued to employ 30 local workers. The dam held in place two artificial lagoons which were used to purify fluorite. Although it appears that Prealpi Mineraria's lease only permitted the dam to be used for cleaning minerals mined at the site, Val Di Stava's two basins sifted ore for the company's other mines, in the regions of Bergamo and Alto Adige.

AP

Common grave for some of those who died in the Val di Stava

The huge quantity of dumped residues had formed two slag islands within the lagoons. Some claim that these deposits may have weakened the surrounding limestone; undoubtedly they added to the pressure on the walls of the dam.

Fabio Ballardin, a geologist quoted by the communist paper *Il Manifesto*, commented on the dam: 'When one constructs a basin to hold water, the banks must be secure, and much more secure if above the first basin one constructs a second one. Between them there must be terracing . . . One could see that none of this had been done there.' Ballardin's pronouncement was: 'It was inevitable that the dam would break sooner or later.'

THE VAL DI STAVA dam burst has also brought attention to the inadequacy of Italian law and public administration in preventing disasters of this kind. While rescue workers scrambled in the five kilometre stretch of sticky mud covering Val Di Stava, it was difficult to ascertain who should be held responsible: the district, the region, the province, various state inspection bodies . . .

Hydro-electric dams in Italy, for example, are supervised by the Ministry of Public Works, if they are more than 10 metres high. Smaller dams are the responsibility of the Civil Engineers Corps. In the case of the Prealpi Mineraria's lagoons, the province's mining department was responsible for technical supervision. But there are no laws or government norms laid down concerning what type of checks should be made, or how often.

Decision making falls under separate categories: There have been calls for the resignation of the provinces' council clerks for industry, and for forests, public water and mountain basins. However, it was the district council of Treviso which had previously permitted Prealpi Mineraria to continue work, and just given permission for the dams to be enlarged.

The central government has also consistently failed to take precautions. Italy's death rate due to natural disasters is five times higher than the world average. Many of these cases, such as the 1963 dam burst at nearby Langarone, which killed more than 2,000 inhabitants, result from poor inspection of Italy's mountainous areas which are plagued by landslides, earthquakes and geological faults. Meanwhile, a bill for the protection of the soil which was scheduled for 1970 has still not been made law. According to Floriano Villa, president of the National Association of Italian Geologists, the Italian government has a 'non-existent' seismographic service run by nine experts with some 40 geologists, a corps which has not grown over the last 100 years.

While calls for justice and promises of investigations and reforms come from local and national politicians, Villa claims that he has been warning government ministers for 30 years about the risks of dam bursts and landslides.

Although no doubt the official investigations will lead to prosecutions, only action at a national level could possibly make Italy — with some 7,500 mountain lakes and dams — significantly safer. □

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

There is a tradition of an Ancient Wisdom relevant, however, to any age and people. It tells of the eternal verities of existence, of Universal processes and laws which are of the nature of Nature herself — of whom we are all part.

This must be of interest to real thinkers . . .

For information write to:
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UN DECADE FOR WOMEN

POLITICS BITES BACK IN NAIROBI

JANIE HAMPTON on the fights and feelings of 14,000 delegates

Nairobi

THE UN Decade for Women conference which finished on Friday got off to a shaky start three weeks ago when twice as many women as expected turned up in Nairobi. The Kenyan government had offered to hold the three-week conference but found the task greater than it had imagined; UN organisers flying in from New York days before it began found they had no offices, telephones or transport. In spite of spending millions of shillings refurbishing the University there were still not enough beds for the 14,000 official and Non-Government delegates from 151 nations.

The weekend before the official opening on 9 July city council workers were working overtime on a miraculous transformation of this Third World city. The city centre was swept, waist high grass cut and deep pot holes in the main streets filled in. Women fruit sellers, prostitutes and disabled beggars suddenly disappeared and groups of armed police moved in.

'It's so nice to see that the Kenyan government have found the beggars gainful employment,' an American woman who had visited Kenya before commented sarcastically. The International Prostitutes Collective drew

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up a petition against the arrest of hundreds of Nairobi's prostitutes.

Over 100 films and as many videos were brought by women from all over the world but the censors said they must see them all and they had no video equipment, or Spanish and Portuguese interpreters. Eventually the Minister of Culture, Kenneth Matiba, relented under pressure and agreed to allow video showings and hasten the process. Only one Arabic film was banned as unsuitable.

The 10 day Non-Government Organisations' forum was held in the University where groups of different nationalities mingled and chatted on the grassy campus. Those who could not communicate by speech either sang, danced or held hands. Over a thousand discussion workshops were held in the NGO forum, of which a third were proposed by the USA. Many Western women came with fixed views of what feminism meant, and soon realised that Third World women have different priorities. 'We don't want women to be equal to men, we are different,' said Dr Eddah Gachukia, who chaired the NGO forum.

Workshop subjects ranged from 'Afghan women for peace' to 'Women fishing in Alaska'. Female circumcision was discussed by women from 26 African nations who said it was their problem which they would prefer to solve without Western interference.

IN THE BLUE striped peace tent put up by a group of West German peace activists squabbles frequently broke out between warring nations. Iraqi women claimed that a peace resolution sent to the Iranian delegation was returned. For alphabetical reasons their tables at the UN conference were together but they turned their backs on each other. During a packed discussion on South America, Chilean exiles slipped out under the awnings when the official delegate from Chile asked for their names.

Betty Friedan, the spritely American feminist in her 60s, set up shop under a shady tree. Admirers of *The Feminine Mystique* crowded round during her daily 'tree sessions' while she pronounced on the world, visibly upset by the fights in the nearby peace tent.

In spite of Maureen Reagan's plea that politics were not women's issues, they soon became the focus of interest. While the Israeli delegate read her country's paper all the Arabic delegates staged a walk out and chanted 'Down with Zionist aggression'. The PLO and Israelis claimed daily that the other side was victimising them. The African National Congress, hearing a rumour that Mrs Pik Botha was due to make a surprise visit, took over the South African delegates' table. 'We belong to South Africa, we won't move from here,' said Ruth Mompati.

After a 13-year battle the international Wages for Housework Campaign persuaded the UN conference to include a paragraph in the forward looking strategies that urged all governments to count women's work, whether paid or unpaid, in the Gross National Product.

At the British delegation's welcoming cocktail party Baroness Young of Farnworth looked embarrassed when NGO feminists read a statement claiming the British delegation was not representative by race, creed or background. They pointed out that the UK country paper advocating more health care in the home was all part of the Conservative policy to reduce social service costs by using more voluntary female labour. 'It's typical of the Tory government to use the UN Decade for Women as a platform for their reactionary policies,' said an NGO feminist.

Dame Anne Warburton and Baroness Gardner of Parkes admitted that they did not really understand the ramifications of all the resolutions they were busily passing. 'We do know that we are not legally obliged to implement any of the forward looking strategies,' confessed Dame Warburton, a civil servant.

Justifying the three men among the dozen delegates, Michael Gillespie of the Home Office explained: 'I'm not a man, in this context, I'm simply a symptom of my organisation.' Britain did better than some in its male to female ratios: North Korea sent no women at all and West Germany's official delegation was headed by a man.

A massive march through the city was planned by Bella Abzug, US Congresswoman and large hat wearer, to celebrate women's unity. But police reminded her that since the attempted coup of 1982 all public demonstrations are banned in Kenya. Instead, over 10,000 women joined hands and sang 'We Shall Overcome' as balloons filled the sky in the University campus. Even a Kenyan policewoman was biting back the tears. □

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LETTERS

Allies for free access

Dave Cook, London SW9

Brian Wilson (*NS* 19 July) is on to something very important when he suggests that for the Left to take up the issue of private ownership of vast estates 'might prove popular'. This connects to the related question of free access to all non-agricultural land, something about which many people feel strongly but on which the Left has little to say.

In Scotland 'sporting grandees', in both their ancient and modern forms, have always resisted free access by city dwellers to their unrivalled acres. Now Thatcherism adds new threats to our 'freedom to roam' and not just in the Highlands. Wilderness areas are a source of great economic potential. Hence, privatisation — openly of Forestry Commission lands, by stealth with the increasing domination of National Park Boards by agricultural and quarrying interests. Since the Falklands War the Ministry of Defence has brought a new zeal to their longstanding exclusion of walkers and climbers from huge areas of moorland and coast.

Organisations representing ramblers, rock climbers and cavers are having to deal with these threats. The Labour Movement, among whose ranks are millions who enjoy the countryside, should take up the cause of free access, and ally with the 'outdoor movement'. A policy commitment by Labour to enact a law guaranteeing free access to all non-agricultural land (subject to the needs of wildlife, environment and those who work there) would be a good first step.

Cigarette advertising

Peter Thomson, Director-General, The Advertising Standards Authority

In attempting to defend a pamphlet which they rashly endorsed, and which was shown in short order to be replete with invention and inaccuracy, Drs Havard and Player (Letters 19 July) adopt the interesting ploy of substituting a separate set of misrepresentations and inventions of their own for those of the hapless authoresses.

If any of your readers would be interested in knowing what the present rules about cigarette advertising actually are, what the role of the Advertising Standards Authority is, and how both matters were misrepresented by the BMA/HEC pamphlet, I shall be happy to send them copies of the Cigarette Code and of a letter to Dr Havard itemising the pamphlet's inadequacies to which we still await any substantive response five weeks after he received it.

Bad press for gays

Nick Billingham, National Executive, Campaign for Homosexual Equality

Congratulations on printing the text of Andrew Lumsden's lecture on the British media's approach to lesbian and gay issues, a topic that has long cried out for proper analysis (*NS* 19 July). Everyone knows that there has been a sea change in the public perception of and attitude towards homosexuality and gay people, yet the press are foremost among those parts of the establishment that obstinately refuse to recognise this.

Without excusing the excesses of the tabloids, the more culpable omissions have been those of the so-called quality press. We are often accused of being over-sensitive, but the contrast with the equivalent newspapers in other Western European countries is so great as to lead inescapably to the conclusion that this is a peculiarly English phenomenon.

Examples abound, but one that struck me particularly forcefully concerned the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of VE Day. The President of West Germany, in an address which understandably attracted a lot of attention, made a point of referring to the gay victims of Nazi concentration camps along with the other victims. This was probably the first time that a Head of State had done so and it was widely reported on the continent, but the only reference that I heard to this part of his speech in this country was on independent radio.

We all know that the British government's commemoration of Nazi persecution of gays has so far been confined to the Custom's action in seizing as indecent a book dealing with the history of this atrocity. Their actions, however, are aided and abetted by the failure of our press to perform the function of truthful and responsible reporting.

Irish ironies

Conor Ryan, London N1

John Hedges and Sinn Fein (Letters 19 July) must know why my article concentrated on the battle between the Workers Party and Labour in the Irish local elections. The fact is that Sinn Fein's diffuse national support in the Republic includes a good deal of conservative old-style Republican votes, which have much more in common with the 'green wing' of Fianna Fail than the Irish Left.

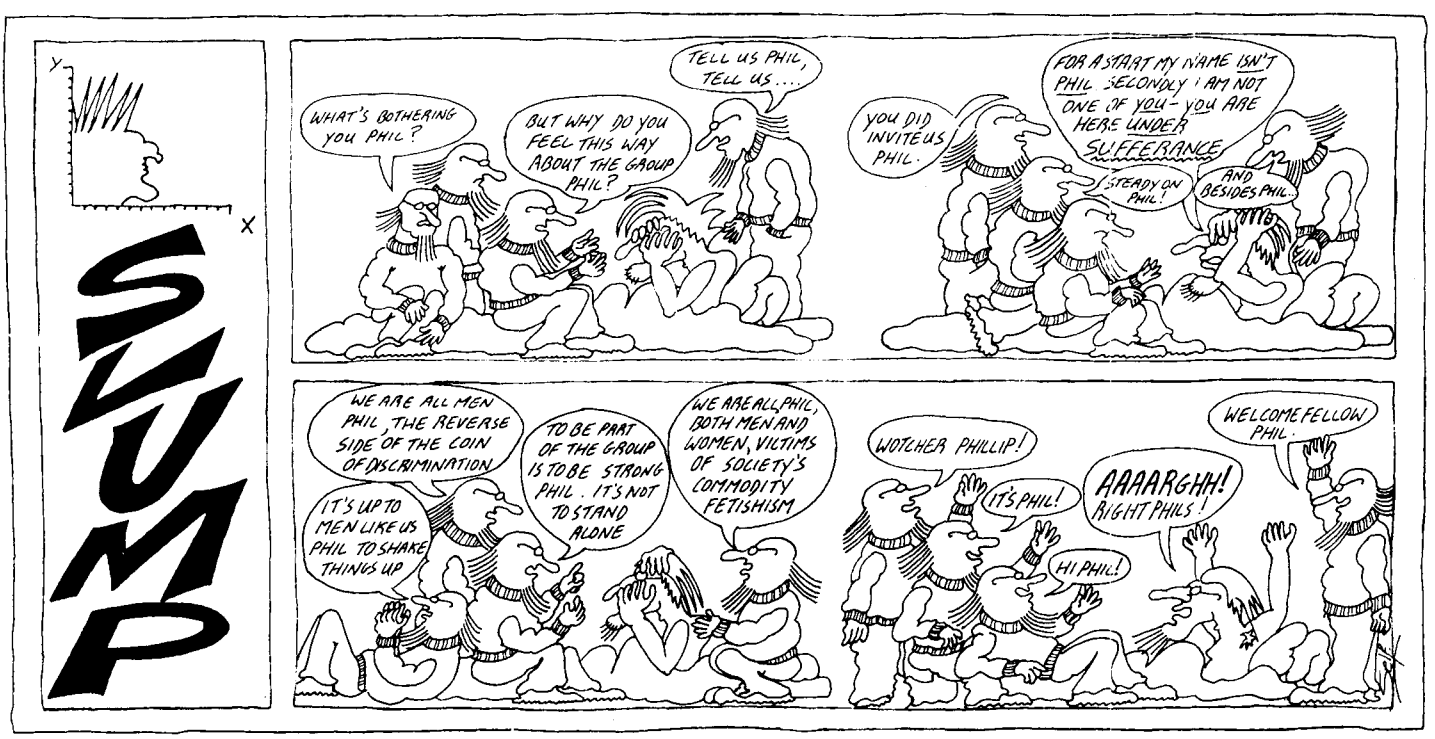
While it is true that his raw figures seem to indicate a growth in support for Sinn Fein from 1979 to 1984, he fails to present us with the more comparable figures: comparisons between H-Block candidates in 1981/2 and the 1984 Sinn Fein vote. There has in fact been a significant drop in Republican votes cast.

Finally, he must also realise that many of SF's supporters in urban areas see the party as one of protest and are quite happy to give their second preferences to 'the pro-partitionist Workers Party'. Such is the ironic nature of Irish politics!

The tapes to talk about

Ted Davis, The Talking Newspaper Association, 68a High St, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8JB

May I ask your readers to tell their visually handicapped friends and neighbours that a 90-minute weekly tape of *New Statesman* is available from us at an annual subscription of £5. This service includes most national and Sunday papers and a large variety of magazines.


Y
X
SLUMP
WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU PHIL?
BUT WHY DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY ABOUT THE GROUP PHIL?
TELL US PHIL, TELL US....
YOU DID INVITE US PHIL.
FOR A START MY NAME ISN'T PHIL SECONDLY I AM NOT ONE OF YOU - YOU ARE HERE UNDER SUFFERANCE
STEADY ON PHIL!
AND BESIDES PHIL
WE ARE ALL MEN PHIL, THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE COIN OF DISCRIMINATION
IT'S UP TO MEN LIKE US PHIL TO SHAKE THINGS UP
TO BE PART OF THE GROUP IS TO BE STRONG PHIL. IT'S NOT TO STAND ALONE
WE ARE ALL PHIL, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, VICTIMS OF SOCIETY'S COMMODITY FETISHISM
WOTCHER PHILLIP!
IT'S PHIL!
HI PHIL!
AAAARGHH! RIGHT PHILS!
WELCOME FELLOW PHIL.

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Pablo Diaz: they stripped him and tied him down. They turned on the current and he could smell himself burning

REIGN OF TERROR

For ten years the security forces in Argentina, in the name of combatting terrorism, visited a reign of terror, often unimaginable in its nonchalant, personal cruelty, on hundreds of thousands of their own citizens. The nine men who wielded State power in this period are now on trial. COLM TOIBIN, in the first of two articles, describes the evidence brought against them.

THEY ALWAYS CAME at night, like in the movies. Day after day new witnesses tell of the sound of cars pulling up outside houses and loud bangs at the doors with voices shouting: 'Open up, open up'. In the last week of September 1976 they went after the Union of Secondary School Students who had sought a lowering in transport fares. Most of the kids they took in have never been seen since; most of them are dead. The only information we have about them comes from fellow prisoners who have survived.

Pablo Diaz survived. At four in the morning they came for him. He was eighteen and had been involved in the campaign for cheaper fares. His brother answered the door; the men said they were from the army, although they wore no uniforms. They brought all the family into the living room and made them lie face-down on the floor; upstairs they found a list of names and demanded to know who were the people on the list. Pablo Diaz's sister told them they were the children she taught in primary school. They stole a camera, some jewellery, some clothes. They took Pablo Diaz away with them. For three months the family heard nothing of him.

In February 1977 the family got news of Pablo Diaz from an anonymous caller and they went to see an army general who told them that he had been arrested while distributing pamphlets in the street. The mother said he had been taken from the house at four in the morning. The general said no, that he was arrested while distributing pamphlets in the street. The mother repeated that this was not true. The general had nothing more to say.

'Our ages ranged between fourteen and eighteen', Pablo Diaz told the court. 'We had our eyes covered and our hands tied all the time. But sometimes we could untie ourselves and try and look around. There were an equal number of boys and girls. The only clothes we wore were the rags of our underwear. Some of the girls were almost naked'.

The torturers always wanted to know names of friends and associates from school who might know something about subversion. They told him they had a lie detector. 'I told them it was okay, they could use it, I thought it was one of those things we saw in the movies where a dial moves when you tell a lie'.

It wasn't a lie detector; it was an electric cattle prod. They stripped him and tied him down. They turned on the current and he could smell himself burning, it was like the smell of meat burning, he said. They used the prod on his genitals, his lips; they forced his mouth open and they used the prod on his gums.

When you are being tortured you clench your fists; one day they told him that when he was ready to give names he was to open his hands and they would turn off the current. That day the torture was so bad that he kept on clenching and unclenching his fists.

They turned the current off and asked for names. He said he had no names. They asked him why he had unclenched his fists. They said he was just playing with them. 'We're going to teach you', one of them said. He told another to go and get a wrench. When he brought the wrench they used it to pull out a nail from one of Pablo Diaz's feet. The pain was so excruciating that he kept asking them to kill him, just kill him.

For three months the members of the Union of Secondary School Students who had sought a travel concession were held. Their hands were tied behind their backs, the rope was attached to a noose around their necks so that if they tried to move their hands the noose would tighten. They were all blindfolded. They were tortured almost every day. For the first week they were given no food; after that rations were meagre. Pablo Diaz cried so much that his blindfold began to rot; his eyes became infected; he kept telling the guards that he was going blind; that if they could just take off the blindfold and put on a clean one he would be okay. They ignored him, however, and over the next couple of months his eyesight deteriorated until he was completely blind. Later a prison doctor washed his eyes with alcohol and slowly partial sight was restored.

The cells were damp and cold. Pablo Diaz tried to make contact with his fellow students and they tried to organise singing competitions to keep their spirits up but it was difficult as, in Pablo Diaz's words, 'there had grown a relationship between the silence, the solitude and the torture'. Through the wall he began to form a friendship with a girl named Claudia, who was later murdered like the rest of them. Slowly he fell in love with her, even though he had never seen her. He would tell her that when they got out that they would become *novios*, she would be his girlfriend. One day a guard took his blindfold off and let him into her cell. He told the court that she said to him: 'Thanks for the strength you have given me but please don't touch me. We can never have a relationship. Don't touch me because during the torture they raped me. They raped me in front and behind'.

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They told Pablo Diaz they were going to shoot him, they left his blindfold on and his hands tied, he could feel the gun against his head; others in the room, to be shot too, were screaming, but he remained still. 'It is just a second but this second will stay in my memory for ever. A soldier fired the gun and I stayed there waiting for the pain and blood to appear . . .' He heard voices but still wasn't sure whether he was alive or dead.

After three months in this concentration camp called Banfield, he was officially charged with distributing pamphlets in the street and held for four years. He was one of the few secondary school students detained in September 1976 who ever saw the light of day again.

THESE ARE THE figures. In 1973 nineteen people disappeared in Argentina and are presumed murdered by the security forces; in 1974 the figure went up to fifty; in 1975 it rose to 359; in 1976 the generals took over from Isabel Peron, 3,850 people were detained and never seen again; the following year, 1977, the figure was 2,845; in 1978 it went down to 955; in 1979 to 1,701; in 1980 to seventy eight; in 1981 to twenty; in 1982 to twelve; in 1983 to nine. We are thus talking about the murder of between eight and nine thousand people. The figures come from CONADEP, the independent body which was set up to monitor the disappearances. The figures are backed up by names, dates and details. Most observers believe that the figures are conservative; some believe that they are very conservative.

It is impossible to tell how many were detained during this period and later released. Most people here accept 100,000 as a conservative figure. It is believed that half of this number were beaten or tortured. I have been told by several journalists who worked here during 1976 and 1977 that if you were taken in by the army or the police you had roughly a one in ten chance of being murdered. If, however, you were detained by the navy you had a one in ten chance of getting out alive.

The nine generals and admirals who ran this country between the coup in March 1976 and the elections in 1982 are on trial. The accused, charged with gross infringements of human rights, include three former Presidents: Viola, Videla and Galtieri. If found guilty they will be publicly stripped of their rank and imprisoned for up to 25 years. They are not required to attend the trial and all except Videla, who refuses to recognise the court, have appointed lawyers to defend them. The State has appointed a lawyer to represent Videla.

The six judges are young, much younger than the defence team. Each judge spends a week as President of the court, and then hands over to another of the six. Only the President can ask the witnesses questions; all communication from the defence and the prosecution must come through him. Most of the questions from the defence are disallowed. Half of them have already been answered — the defence doesn't seem to listen — and the President immediately says: 'That has already been answered, do you have another question?'

The defence then attempts to suggest that the witness or the subject of the evidence is a member of a subversive organisation. The presiding judge makes clear that the witnesses are not on trial, the accused are on trial and such questions are always disallowed. The third type of questions are the most insidious and frightening. A man who told the court that his sister had been threatened was asked by the defence for his sister's address. A man who said his wife was too frightened to give evidence was asked for her name. On both occasions a shiver went through the court and the judge refused to allow the question to be answered.

IT IS EASY to dismiss what happened in Argentina between 1976 and 1980 as another example of South American irrationality and cruelty, the world made flesh by the writings of Gabriel Garcia Marquez where the general spends the morning in a brothel, the mayor is on the make and the air is thick with mosquitos. It is easy to see torture with an electric cattle prod, detention without trial, sudden disappearances of people as part of the appalling metaphysics of South America, which will always be with us.

What happened in Argentina, however, was not metaphysical. What happened in Argentina was political and belongs much more to contemporary European history than to the world of El Gaucho Martin Fierro. What happened in Argentina belongs to the scenario where the men in power perceive a threat from terrorism, real or imaginary, and instruct the security forces to defeat terrorism by any means at their disposal. The security forces comply.

This time the threat to the security of the state came from the Monteneros, a terrorist group and from another terrorist group ERP. Neither of these groups had any public support and both were involved in planting bombs, kidnappings and assassinations.

So far there has been no evidence that Viola, Videla, Galtieri or any of their colleagues made any effort to stop the army detaining, torturing and murdering members of the Peronist party, who were the main opposition, or trade unionists, members of left-wing groups, or friends, relatives and associates of any of these. Or just people they happened to find in places where they were looking for someone else. Or names that came from nowhere.

Bodies were found but there wasn't much publicity. Life continued as normal, as it did elsewhere in Europe under similar circumstances. Those who drew attention to what was happening were accused of offering aid to the subversives, of helping the Monteneros. When the armed forces came in the night and dragged off a member of the family, the family called the police, they tried to make statements in police stations, they hired lawyers and went to the courts; they applied over and over for *habeas corpus*: they believed the system was still working. Nobody knew what was happening and if people had been told they wouldn't have believed it.

It is easy to find the torturers, the prison staff, the police, army and navy personnel and there is enough definite evidence to lock hundreds of them up. Some of them are already serving sentences. But this trial, which will run for months, is not designed to deal with them. This trial is designed to get the nine top men who ran the place during these years, the men who, whether directly or indirectly, gave the orders. The politicians are on trial.

DURING THESE YEARS there were between one hundred and two hundred secret centres for detention, torture and murder in the greater Buenos Aires area. This week we have been hearing about one of these, known to its inmates as El Club Atletico. We have been hearing in particular about the activities of two torturers: Julian El Turco and Colores.

Everybody who was detained in El Club Atletico remembers Julian El Turco and Colores. Colores was so-called because he had fair hair and freckles. Evidence is given that he loved torturing prisoners; he enjoyed being in the room with the electric cattle prod. Julian El Turco, they remember, those who survive, was much bigger and stronger than Colores. Grasiella Trotte was three months pregnant when Julian El Turco and Colores started torturing her, holding the cattle prod on her vagina, on her breasts. Eventually she had to be sent to the infirmary. The only other patient there was a man whose skin had been burnt off, whose body was full of ulcers and sores, who screamed day and night, who screamed for his wife and his child. Julian El Turco came up one day to the infirmary and broke his jaw so he could no longer eat. No other evidence was given about him.

A police doctor gives evidence of how he was called when 30 bodies had been recovered after an explosion in the Fatima area of Buenos Aires. He examined the bodies and found that all but two had been shot in the head before the explosion.

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Some were later identified as being the relatives of those who had earlier given evidence. There is a rumour that a policeman involved is going to give evidence. He will be the second policeman directly involved in the detention centres to give evidence to the tribunal.

His name is Armando Lucini. His evidence is cold, flat, factual, to the point. There's a certain exasperation in his tone. Yes, he put 30 people into a lorry that night. Yes, they were the same people who were later found dead. Yes, at the time he did consider it a 'notable coincidence'. He believed they were drugged before they were put into the lorry. He seems about to finish and step down when he is asked if he can remember the names of any of the people. No, he replies, thousands of people went through where he worked. Some were moved elsewhere, some were murdered. He can't remember names.

The judge asks if torture was practised in his detention centre. The answer comes calmly, deliberately. 'What happened was a total aberration, it makes me sick just to think of the tortures I saw. Everyone who came in was tortured, not just for days but for months, every form of torture, they hit them, they burnt them, they raped them, especially the women, but also the men, they beat them with chains'. Lucini's job was to take them back to the cells.

He mentions helicopters and, puzzled, the judge asks him to clarify what he means. Lucini tells the court that they put RAF after the names of the prisoners who were to be sent up on helicopters and thrown out into the Rio de la Plata.

The other policeman had told the court that it was common to wear swastikas in the detention centres. Lucini is asked about this. He confirms that there were many among the security forces with 'nazi tendencies' and nazi literature overflowed in Coordination Federal, where he worked, as did anti-semitism, he claimed.

THE MILITARY leaders who come to give evidence, unlike Lucini, give nothing away. They knew nothing, heard nothing, saw nothing. Only one thing becomes clear: no one in the army made any effort to find out what was going on. One general, asked by a neighbour to help find his daughter, tells the court that he could do nothing: 'I did not investigate because at that time military people were prohibited from making enquiries to find out the whereabouts of people who had been captured by the security forces'.

His evidence was confirmed by, among others, a woman whose husband had been kidnapped in a swoop on a large number of directors of a bank which certain military gents wanted to take over. She went to see a general who told her he could do nothing. The general must have been watching too many movies: as soon as the woman entered he looked up from his desk and said: 'Okay, so they've got your fat little husband. Don't worry, they won't do him any harm, just when you get him back he'll be a little bit thinner'.

The most publicised disappearance during this period was that of Edgardo Sajon who had been the government press secretary up to 1972. He disappeared in September 1977. They phoned his wife to say he hadn't come in to work and she frantically went around police stations in the city trying to find him. She went to see one of the generals, now on trial, and he

Carlos Alberto Hours: watched while they put wires round Sajou's little toe and in his mouth and turned the electricity on

told her that the security forces had many sides and they all worked independently and he couldn't help her. She saw Videla who assured her that her husband had nothing to do with subversion. By the end of the year there was still no news; again she went to see Videla with her four children. His answers were vague. He told her there was 'a pact of silence' in the army over disappearances. She decided not to pursue the case any *further*, realising, as she told the court, that those who talk too much about the disappeared tend to disappear themselves and she had her children to think about.

The search for Sajon was taken over by the former President of Argentina, General Lanusse. Lanusse, in his own words, made a 'vehement and long-lasting attempt to find out what happened to Edgardo Sajon'. He had meetings with four senior members of the government, all of whom are now on trial. He was told that there was a small group which acted independently of the government in security matters. Lanusse sent the government a public telegram asking them for information about Sajon.

They told him nothing. He had better luck when he searched for his cousin Elena Holmberg who was murdered while in detention. Lanusse was allowed to identify the body. While he was waiting in the detention centre he heard a senior officer complain to a junior officer about the delay in finding Holmberg's body. He heard the junior officer reply: 'How can you worry about one body when you have thrown 8,000 into the Rio de la Plata?'

They did not throw Edgardo Sajon's body into the Rio de la Plata. They took him into a room some months after his arrest and told him that they had orders to execute him. Former policeman Carlos Alberto Hours was in the room. He told the court that Sajon continued to abuse his captors as they took off his shoes and wet his clothes and wet the surface of a billiard table which was in the room. They tied him to the billiard table. They put electric wires around his little toe and into his mouth and they plugged in the electricity and that is how they killed him.

Three months before the generals took over power Carlos Alberto Hours had joined a special police squad to detain trade unionists. After the coup, he testified, things became looser and more brutal. Most of the policemen changed their names. Once, he told the court, they surrounded a house and told the occupant to come out; when he did they were ordered to shoot him. 'Did you shoot too?' the judge asked Hours. 'Of course I did'.

The security forces stole from every house they visited. Every single witness has testified that this is so. Sometimes they took electrical goods, clothes, cameras. In the case of Selma Ocampo, taken away in August 1976, her entire flat was stripped of every single item of furniture down to the light bulbs. 'These are the spoils of war', one man was told when he complained. The wife of the torturer Colores could not use the sewing-machine which had been stolen from the house of Grasiella Trotte and Colores applied to Grasiella for instructions. Jorge Alberto Alega was an electrician and they brought him goods to repair which had been broken in transit. They also made him repair electric cattle prods which had broken. One man paid $1600 to a policeman to get his daughter out of the country. His daughter was never seen again.

They also stole cars. Edgardo Sajon was taken while driving to work and neither he nor the vehicle was ever seen again. Santiago Chiessa was held for almost four years. When he was arrested he was driving a car which was in such bad condition that it was, he told the court, 'almost abandoned'. Four years later when they gave him back his car it was almost new. They needed cars for other purposes: Marta Ocampo gave evidence that she lived opposite a centre of detention where stationary empty cars accelerated all night. They were using the power to drive the prods. □

This article first appeared in Dublin. Part II next week: the priest and the middle classes

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Emma Sutherland

A demand that is not being met

Alison Hennegan offers a buyer's criticism of publishers' policies

EVERY THREE MONTHS I buy, on average, another 4,000 books — not for my private library but for The Women's Press Bookclub whose editor I am. The books represent the 18 or so recent titles which I hope will prove the most useful, entertaining, provocative and helpful to our 5,000-plus members, of both sexes, who want to know what is being written by, to and about women who aren't frightened of the word 'feminist'. Each title's shelf-life, in the jargon of the trade, must outlast our quarterly catalogue in which it first appears : books are kept on the stocklist for as long as members show signs of wanting to buy them — just over 150 titles at last count whose subjects and authors cover all continents and more than three millennia.

Over 40 publishers produce the books: some, predictably, are feminist, gay, socialist, 'Third World', alternative — Virago, Pandora, Stramullion, Brilliance, Pluto, Zed. Others are mainstream (Cape, Michael Joseph, Chatto, Hamish Hamilton), 'literary' (Peter Owen, Faber), Giants (Longman, Methuen, Penguin, Macmillan), academic (Croom Helm, RKP, Blackwell) or university presses (Oxford and Manchester). Some are foreign importers, 'prestige' houses from the United States, such as Norton and Morrow, or smaller feminist ones from North America, Eire and Australia. If most of the publishers are based in Britain, our members are far-flung. Parcels go to The People's Republic of China, New Caledonia (South Pacific), Mozambique, Papua, Malaysia, Peru, Taiwan, Chile, Japan and Malawi: a list which excludes what the club's manager airily calls 'the ordinary ones — like Iceland'. Occasionally we put isolated members in touch with others in the same country: Indonesia, most recently.

If I seem to be giving you little more than a list of names and places, I have a reason. The range of publishers suggests how many very different houses now recognize the existence of a feminist market. The roll-call of countries demonstrates vividly how determined members are to get the books they're hungry for. Publishers eager to serve, a readership demanding to be served: the makings of an ideal situation. Yet curiously it sometimes seems as though the very belief in a feminist market which presumably persuaded the publisher to undertake a particular book in the first place dwindles as production progresses. Even giant houses will fix tiny print runs (not always quite reaching four figures) and then be astounded to find they've exhausted the entire edition in pre-publication sales. Never, it seems, having really believed they could sell so many (850, in one instance, of a pioneering work bound to attract historians, feminists and sociologists), arrangements for the theoretically never to be needed reprint often prove protracted and inefficient. (One academic publisher has, I estimate, just wasted six months of what should have been prime selling time: the demand's there, the books aren't.)

SMALL PRINT RUNS frequently force prices up, often into a bracket which many of the book's most interested potential readers just can't afford. That's the point, it seems, at which many publishers decide only a hardback edition makes financial sense. They are, in effect, opting for (dwindling) library sales and 'specialist' reader-buyers. Yet many feminist readers are also 'specialists', but not in the sense which means they expect to have to pay specialist prices — £8.95 upwards (paperback), £14.95 upwards (hardback) — for the books they want to read. Their 'specialism' is Women, and they are prepared to pursue their interest wherever it takes them, often into traditionally 'unpopular' publishing areas: into the literature — poetry as well as prose, short stories as well as novels — of other nations and centuries; into the history of disciplines and skills in which women have been prominent, overlooked or disastrously absent — architecture, crafts, mathematics, music, biochemistry, philosophy, medicine. They'll explore all forms of female sexuality (one of Britain's biggest publishers has just had problems selling serial rights of an international best-seller's new novel because women's magazines jibbed at her lesbian theme: at the same time, one of London's newest feminist bookshops is crying out for more lesbian pulp fiction, a sort of Mills and Boon with which even the sternest lesbian sometimes likes to spend a mindless hour after a rigorous if rewarding reading of Mary Daly's *Gyn/ecology* or *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy*).

Feminist readers are eager for contemporary and historical analyses of the world's social, economic, religious, legal and political systems. Books on these and many other topics have been successfully carried by the bookclub. Endlessly

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diverse subjects have as their single unifying factor the part played by or denied to women.

Many women, I believe, are prepared to tackle 'hard' books as part of their general reading, will expend a degree of intellectual effort unthinkable to many male readers outside the confines of the set curricula of formal study. Their enthusiasm, commitment, preparedness for hard work often matches those of the full-time professional scholar. Their resources do not.

The bookclub offers clearly appreciated concessionary rates to old age pensioners, students and the unemployed. We find that £5.95 (representing at least 25 per cent reduction on the retail price) is about the maximum most members are prepared or able to spend on an individual title. For the great majority of these readers — who are also prepared to be buyers, not just borrowers — hardbacks, even at a now comparatively cheap £10.95, are worse than useless. Books retailing at £20-plus might just as well not exist.

I AM, IN effect, suggesting a new definition of 'specialist reader', and one which might be profitably noted by those publishers who are already specialist in a more conventional sense. When publishers ring up to give me advance information about a forthcoming hardback title, I quite often find myself begging them to consider producing a paperback. They argue that the book's specialist, a bit of a risk, safer just to do a hardback, see how it goes. If sales are good, perhaps they'll try a paperback. I ask how much the hardback's going to be, they tell me £27.50. I ask how the hell they think they're going to sell to *anyone* at that price. Ah well, they reply, it's really more a *library* book, you see. At that price, I say, it certainly is! Impasse — but neither of us hangs up because we're basically well disposed towards each other. I argue that a book dubbed 'minority' in one part of the trade might prove 'popular' in paperback format, differently marketed. I offer them a piece of learning which came particularly hard to me, believing as I still do deep in my impenitent soul that *real* books don't bend: many of our members actually dislike hardback books. Hardback books say weight of learning, institutionally vouched for, to be cherished for a lifetime — or else.... Paperbacks, apparently, say friendly, accessible, discardable if disagreeable.

I probe into their plans for selling the book and suggest that by concentrating their energies and budget on information sheets to institutions of further learning, they're assuming that most of their potential buyers are engaged in formal education. I suggest that pushing harder for reviews — and, in some cases, bothering to send review copies out in the first place — might actually be more helpful. I remind them of the dangers of assuming that a periodical's reviewing patterns are fixed and unchangeable. And, coming full circle, I suggest that some of their most valuable review coverage could come from those very magazines which balk at trailing tempting hardback books at impossible prices before their readers' wistful eyes.

I point out that a substantial number of alternative and feminist publications which carry regular, intelligent and informed book coverage have a policy of reviewing only reasonably priced paperbacks. You might take issue with the policy but it seems foolhardy to ignore its implications. (One learned but thoroughly appealing and firmly feminist book, retailing at £30, which I'd take like a shot if it existed in paperback, still hasn't received a single review yet, five months after publication.)

Sometimes these pleas bear fruit: more often they yield a rather wizened prune. So, for example, my undertaking to buy 200 copies of a collection of historical feminist pamphlets helps to bring the retail price down from £14.95 to £12.95. Agreeing to take 250 copies of an art book determines whether it's reprinted next year or the year after. Taking 200 copies of a novel determines whether it's reprinted at all. Placing a firm order for 250 copies of a feminist non-fiction work tips the balance in favour of a parallel paperback edition. The orders are tiny, their effect considerable — a fact I find both exhilarating and terrifying, and a fact which publishers more comfortably placed refuse to believe. 'Oh no,' one representative of a multi-national told me confidently during a casual party chat, 'that couldn't *possibly* make such a difference.'

Strange though it may sound, I very much wish that it didn't. It certainly shouldn't because the market's there if only more publishers could locate it, address it and, most important of all, listen to it. Doing so could mark the beginning of truly popular specialist publishing. □

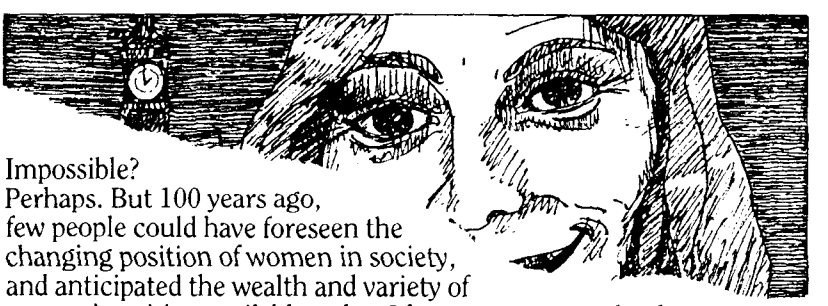
On your marks

Anne McDermid offers an agent's advice to would-be-published writers

FORGET the pools or newspaper bingo. Inspiring even more bitter envy than either is the apparent overnight best-seller. The pacy thriller, including detailed descriptions of how to assemble a howitzer, the glitzy glamour novel containing highly suspect physiological descriptions, the simplistic self-improvement book charging you £12.95 for advice that boils down to eat less and exercise more, these seem to be quickest path to fame and riches these days. It's hard not to let the cry 'I could do that' escape the lips. It all seems such easily earned lolly.

Not so. In fact, the only characteristics shared by most writers earning telephone-number money are utter determination, an endless capacity for hard work and the ability to get by on four hours sleep a night, the same characteristics required by an internationally renowned dancer or a prime minister. In other words, anyone can do it. You may just like to make a note of some simple guidelines. Indeed, if your aspirations are less dramatic and you just want to be published — at all, by anyone — you may wish to make the same note. ▷

New Stateswoman



Impossible?
Perhaps. But 100 years ago, few people could have foreseen the changing position of women in society, and anticipated the wealth and variety of women's writing available today. Of course, women's books still don't get even one-tenth of the coverage of books by men, and even in our more respected weeklies it doesn't approach half.

That's one of the reasons why The Women's Press Bookclub was started – to make a selection of the best of women's writing available through our quarterly catalogues. Our continually up-dated list now carries over 150 titles from many different publishers, *and* we offer discounts of 25 – 50%. If you'd like to see our current catalogue and decide for yourself, fill in the coupon and send it to The Women's Press Bookclub, 124 Shoreditch High Street, London E1 6JE.

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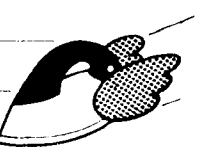

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You need to be tough and professional in your approach. You may be feeling unsure and lacking confidence but you won't impress an editor with diffidence. Editors are busy people, sometimes working in large impersonal houses, and it's not wise to assume on their part qualities of intelligence, wide cultural knowledge, sensitivity to an author's needs, imagination, courage . . . not because these qualities don't exist (I remember bumping into someone who had them in about 1974), but because these attributes have to do battle with considerations of commercial viability — the needs of the publisher's list over the next two years, not to mention the position of the editor, her relative power, how many people she needs to persuade, whether the company is fighting a take-over bid, whether the editor's mother-in-law has just come to stay and sundry other factor you can't control.

So anticipate. Think, 'if I were a hard-pressed editor with money to spend and several dozen projects a week offered me to spend it on, what would impress me most?' It may seem obvious, but the visual presentation of your work is primary. The eyes grow weary after reading 10 or 12 full-length manuscripts in a week and one looks with remarkable lack of enthusiasm on bad typing in cramped typefaces, single spaced on coloured paper with numerous revisions in unreadable handwriting. I know typewriters, stationery and stamps all cost money, but I'm afraid it's the sort of investment you must make if you're going to be serious about this. Nice broad margins, double spaced, typed on one side of the paper only, *numbered* pages and make as many copies as you reasonably can please. Always keep one copy of your manuscript with you. If you think that spelling and grammar are not your strong point have your book looked at by someone whose strong point they are. This — like presentation — wouldn't tell against you if your work was otherwise brilliant, but it is very difficult not to find oneself turning against a manuscript where every word of more than two syllables is mis-spelled (if you are under 35 this undoubtedly applies to you).

Having prepared your material impeccably who do you send it to? Be aware of the market place by noting the publishers of the books you like to read; scour the libraries and bookshops and notice which publishers' imprints are attached to which kind of book; read the reviews and look at the advertisements publishers place in periodicals. You want to find a publisher whose list contains your sort of book; on the other hand it is not sensible to offer your biography of Cardinal Richelieu to someone who has just published one. It's a little harder to make judgments about the right publisher for a novel. Certain publishing houses, for example, are particularly good at publishing thrillers and have the marketing of them down to a fine art, therefore many thriller writers go to them; therefore they have a lot of successful thriller writers on their list and a new one may not get the attention she deserves. On another list which is hungry for thrillers you might get more attention. But if a publisher's list contains no thrillers at all, then that is probably the wrong publisher for you.

Publishers' addresses can be found in that invaluable little book *The Writer's and Artist's Yearbook* published by A & C Black Ltd. It is issued every year and a copy is in your local library. It's always best to write to a named person. Although it takes chutzpah, ring up and ask the person on the switchboard for the name of a commissioning editor. Keep a copy of all your own letters. Don't ring the editor every four days but do follow up with a phone call after six weeks.

I CAN'T FAIL to address the question you are all asking yourselves: 'Do I need a literary agent and, if so, at what stage?' It is widely rumoured that it is harder to find an agent to take you on than a publishing house. This is widely rumoured by unscrupulous literary agents, I'm afraid.

Certainly any literary agent ought to be able to improve your income even at quite an early stage in your career when that income is likely to be small. It is true that a first novelist is likely to receive the same kind of advance from a publisher through an agent as she would directly herself — there simply isn't that much negotiating to be done. However, you may not so readily appreciate the importance of the small print in your contract and the small print in most agents' contracts is more beneficial to the writer than that of the standard publishers' contract. For example, it may not sound terribly dramatic to you that your royalties on export copies are described as being 10 per cent of the net receipts rather than 6 per cent of the English published price, but the difference in your income may be several hundred pounds. Similarly, one complex and jargon-studded warranty clause enjoining you not to commit libel may read much like another, but one wording may make you entirely responsible for any potential payments or damages, while a slightly different wording may enjoin your publisher to share that responsibility.

You may love to wrangle, be prepared to bone up on copyright laws and so on, but most writers would like to relax into a supportive relationship with their publisher secure in the knowledge that any possible unpleasantness about demands for money is handled elsewhere. It's a wonderful feeling to be able to say, 'My dear, I'd simply love to do this book for you for £300, but my agent just won't *let* me.'

There is a widely held view that no agent is interested in you until you have already been published. I don't know who those cowardly people are, but most agents I know get a tremendous thrill out of exercising their own judgment and discovering new talent. The weeks — nay months — it takes after writing your first book before finding a publisher can be nerve-wracking. It's comforting then to know that there is one person outside your family who believes in your book, knows the right people to go to and can reassure you periodically that you are sane in a mad world when it sometimes seems to be the other way round.

THE OTHER thing an agent can do for you is to find you the right editor. You may have an idea about the appropriate publishing house but you can't know which editor within that house would suit your temperament. Do you need to be bullied or cajoled, fiercely edited or given mild suggestions? Having an editor you trust can make a huge difference to your happiness and success.

Of course, compatible temperament is even more vital for your agent who will, at various times, play marriage guidance counsellor, psychiatrist, mother, business manager, etc. How can you choose the right one? For a start, *The Writer's and Artist's Yearbook* also lists agents. You can tell from the date of foundation how old the agencies are, by the list of directors or description of activities how large they are. If you want to work in a particular field, you may want to approach an agency which specifies that it does film and television rights, plays or whatever. Write to some of these offering your manuscript and asking for an appointment. Most agents are deeply offended if they learn that you have approached several agents simultaneously but don't be intimidated. There is no reason why you shouldn't take care over your choice of agent and, as long as you admit that you are talking to several people at the same time, a good agent should understand the situation. Beware of being influenced by speed; it may be extremely good for your morale to have an agent come back to you the next day, having read your book, but it may simply mean that he isn't very good and therefore isn't very busy.

Agents are more difficult to track down than publishers. Ask all the writers you know about their own experiences; the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild may be prepared to make recommendations; if a writer has mentioned her agent in the acknowledgements of her book that is usually a good sign and, if you like that writer, you might like her agent.

If you care about it enough and if you have something you really want to say, you will be published eventually. If you want to make as much money as Shirley Conran and set out to imitate her, you'll probably fail. But if you really love the words pouring on to your word processor, you may be on your way. □

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An endangered species

Sheila MacLeod offers a writer's view of publishers

ON HER RETURN from the United States in 1836 Harriet Martineau was visited at home by three separate and rivalrous publishers, all offering her large sums of money for a book on her American travels and possibly a novel. Having declined Mr Bentley's 'extravagant terms' and Mr Colburn's '£2000 for the present work . . . and £1000 for the first novel I should write,' she accepted an offer of £900 for the copyright of the first edition from Mr Saunders of Saunders and Otley because she liked him best. That night she went to bed 'with a disgusted and offended feeling of having been offered bribes all day long, with a confidence which was not a little insulting.'

Emma Sutherland

What I find striking about this anecdote is that, whereas the attitudes of the publishers are eminently recognisable, the author's remain foreign, rather quaint. Martineau was not disposed to discuss terms with any of her importunate visitors and clearly found the very idea of an auction quite distasteful. It would seem that it is writing rather than publishing which has been considered 'an occupation for gentlemen' — or even ladies — and that it is authors rather than publishers who have changed over the last 150 years or so.

The myth of gentility has been a convenient one for publishers in more ways than one. Ladies and gentlemen (authors) do not discuss anything as vulgar as money, know nothing of the finer (or even blunter) points of a contract and would not dream of questioning a royalty statement or complaining over a late payment. It all works by trust. At the same time, ladies and gentlemen (publishers) are not required to be efficient and business-like in the promoting and selling of books. It's all done by flair and word of mouth. But if authors really were ladies and gentlemen, they would not survive as professional writers; and if publishers really were ladies and gentlemen, they would not survive as commercial ventures.

The myth has now outlived its usefulness, and there are few publishers today who would see their occupation in any other than market terms, but vestigial traces of it remain. That gentlemanly organisation, the Publishers'

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Martyn Goff, **Daily Telegraph**

"Highly individual new voice."
David Hughes, **Mail on Sunday**

"In Robert Walshe's extraordinary first novel nothing is what it seems . . . Fantasy, satire, plain frolic? Something of all three, though plain is ever the word."
Norman Shrapnel, **Guardian**

"It erupts with a maniacal glee in words and language, but Walshe is no dry semiologist. Spikily and mischievously erudite, it's a linguistic car-chase of a book; mad, hilarious and brilliant."
John Gill, **Time Out**

"Makes most contemporary fiction look like pulp . . . the most interesting and wickedly funny novel I've read since I began writing . . . I can think of no other novel written in recent years which bears comparison."
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£8.95

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Association, consistently refuses to discuss, let alone negotiate, a Minimum Terms Agreement with the writers' unions, and so the joint efforts of the Writers' Guild and the Society of Authors have had to be directed to negotiating with publishers one by one. The refusal is symptomatic: authors are not to be taken seriously as a united professional body with a common aim. And, rather oddly, neither are publishers themselves.

It seems to me that publishers can't make up their minds whether they are the gentlemen they have always pretended to be or the hard-headed business men (and, latterly, women) they have more often been in actuality, as witness Messrs Bentley, Colburn and Saunders. They want to have it both ways, insisting that good relationships are worth more than watertight contracts, while continuing to outbid one another competitively for any flavour-of-the-month author with a story that will Sell. Neither way works to the benefit of most authors who, disgusted by the outrageous sums offered to their mainly unworthy contemporaries, are likely to be labelled 'difficult' or 'ungrateful' (yes, really!) if they try to negotiate on behalf of themselves.

But publishers can't have it both ways. If they are gentlemen, they should behave like gentlemen rather than cut-throat cads and publish books for the love of literature rather than for commercial gain. If, however, they are business people, they should behave in a business-like manner, treating their authors as business partners rather than as starry-eyed amateurs who are so delighted to see their work in print that any other sort of reward becomes irrelevant or even unnecessary.

Confused as they are about their own professional status, publishers expect us authors to be equally uncertain about ours. Often they are right. To earn one's living by writing books is a lonely, risky business which can induce paranoia and megalomania by turns — or even both at once. Such states of mind are easily exploitable by those who hold the power and the purse-strings. If you don't earn large sums of money for your publisher, you will often be reminded of this fact, the implication being that any of his/her attentions should then be received in gratitude as so many favours. If, however, you are a money-spinner, your attention will be drawn to other authors published under the same imprint who have received enthusiastic reviews and are all set to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Such ploys are part of the power game designed to elevate publishers to the status of omnipotent employers and to downgrade authors to that of lowly employees whose services can easily be dispensed with and whose names can as easily be replaced on the publisher's list.

But of course it is all the other way around. As entrepreneurs between us and our readers, publishers can more properly be seen as our employees. In the literary world, as elsewhere, the Age of Empire is at an end and authors should no longer be seen as colonies to be exploited for our raw materials, but as sister nations with whom trade can now be undertaken on reciprocal terms. The hard fact of the matter (as far as publishers are concerned) is that they could not exist without us, but we could and often do exist without them. We are in the middle of a technological revolution which could well render the publisher obsolete and it ill becomes an endangered species to ignore or belittle the demands of another species with whom symbiosis may yet be possible.

Confuse, divide — and rule. This is the self-imposed prescription for publishers everywhere. It is a necessary one, not only because they are confused and divided, and trying to divert attention from both their confusions and divisions, but because they are clinging on to a power-base which is at once inappropriate and largely imaginary. They seem to see their power in terms of property, and it is no accident that both books and authors are referred to as 'properties', or that a publisher will refer to 'my/our author', as if in terms of ownership. Rumour has it that last November the word went round among publishers: 'Have you heard? Liz Calder [Anita Brookner's editor at Cape] has won the Booker Prize.' The publishing world is full of such delusions.

Could it be that publishers are all writers *manqués*? Such was the accusation levelled so memorably by Fay Weldon against producers and directors at the Edinburgh Television Festival in 1983. And, for an author, this is a temptingly self-enhancing speculation. But, although there is much truth in it, I'm not so sure. It seems to me, rather, that publishers regard writing as a subsidiary activity specifically designed to keep the publishing industry going and authors as subsidiary creatures who do all the donkey work to the greater glory of publishers. This is less a literary or commercial glory (although it can in part be both) than a personal one which will bring the publisher not only promotion but, within the peer group, the sort of fame and prestige which may accrue to the author from the general public. The only *really* good author is one who serves these ends. It is a very small world. And a very insecure one.

In his otherwise excellent book *An Author's Guide to Publishing* (Hale, 1982) Michael Legat confesses that he finds the acrimony between authors and publishers difficult to explain, concluding that 'it stems from the fact that very few authors understand much about publishing . . . and, even more, from the other fact that, as a group, authors are trusting, not to say gullible.' It could equally well be argued that there are very few publishers who understand much about writing (particularly the insecurities of the freelance life) and are prepared to take the sort of risks that are part of the business of authorship. In addition, if trust and gullibility between two parties can lead to acrimony, it is reasonable to assume that one party is betraying the trust of the other and doing a fair amount of gulling into the bargain. Really, Legat's argument is a bit of a giveaway.

I also think it is wrong. Singly and especially at the beginning of our careers, we may well be trusting and gullible. As a group, collectively, we are not, and there are few susceptible Harriet Martineaus to be found in the present-day ranks of the writers' organisations. Authors nowadays are less likely to be ladies and gentlement with other financial means at their disposal (unless of course they are academics with nice, regular salaries and more vanity than greed) than women and men who know who they are and what they want. If only publishers could recognise as much. And if only the same could be said for them. □

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Among this week's contributors:

Alison Hennegan, Literary Editor of *Gay News* from 1977-1983, has been editor of the Women's Press Bookclub for the last 18 months. She contributed to the recently published *Truth, Dare or Promise: Girls Growing Up in the Fifties* (Virago).

Anthony Blond has written about publishing in *The Book Book* published recently by Cape at £9.95.

Sheila MacLeod's book about D. H. Lawrence is due out shortly from Heinemann.

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Leaves from each other's books

Anthony Blond offers news from a recent international gathering of publishers

Motovun 28 June — 2 July 1985

FOR FIFTY YEARS Ed Booher worked for McGraw-Hill, one of the heftiest communication outfits in the world — with a turnover of $1.3bn, and for the last few he had 49 floors of employees under him as the Chairman and President of their publishing operations.

He is now much happier (he says) to chair the meetings at Motovun, where with seven other like spirits he has a house, and where gather for a few days from the last Friday in June, often with their wives and children, 60-odd publishers from most parts of the world. Motovun is a mini ante- (and slightly anti-) Frankfurt Book Fair. You have to be invited. The very powerful are not.

The little hill town, equidistant from the cities of Trieste and Rijeka, which bracket Istria, has had a history almost too varied for the health and happiness of its equally varied inhabitants. The Celts were there early, merging with the indigenous Illyrians whose king committed suicide with all his warriors after defeat by the Romans. Then came Charlemagne, then the Venetians for 500 years leaving their special mark; France and Austria briefly, a lousy time under the Fascists and now Istria is part of the Croatian republic of Yugoslavia, itself a strange but working confection of disparate minorities, some from the former Austrian Empire. The Italians have fled, leaving their little five-storey town houses vacant and derelict.

Motovun, a genial place, acquires a *genius loci:* Bato Tomasevic, a publisher from Belgrade of impeccable party and partisan connections whose vision of the town as a spring-board for the concoction of international book projects has been justified. It is nearly complete, too, for the lecture hall looking on to the Square where we conferred (his English wife Madge interpreting for the Yugoslavs and the Chinese bringing their own) and the school-room opposite, where we showed each other our wares, could not squeeze in more than half-a-dozen more publishers; so it will stay small.

BATO IS the epitome of the successful international art book publisher, at ease and always immaculate in San Francisco at the American Booksellers Association, in Bologna (for children's books) or at Frankfurt — the biggy.

Today's art book is international both in production and in sales. A title like *China* was conceived by Bato Tomasevic in Motovun. It originated in Shanghai and the colour pix were the first to be seen in the West since the thaw. The printing was handled by John Clark of Scala, Florence, a Motovun pioneer, and 120,000 copies were manufactured in Milan — big business at a cover price of £19.50.

A surprising and beautiful art book will be *The Sistine Chapel Restored* — due to be published next year. The project began in Motovun last year when my partner Antony White negotiated for the English language rights with a Japanese agent, representing Nippon TV, who are (amazingly) funding the actual work of restoration in Rome. Seven scholars, including André Chastel, John Shearman and Fabrizio Mancinelli, are contributing essays; so 'the Black', as art book publishers somewhat dismissively call the text, should be up to the standard of the pix, which are stunning.

We will see the masterpiece of Michelangelo at which he worked with such precision and fury, as he did. *The Sistine Chapel Restored* is designed by Emil Buhrer — the spitting image of Anthony Quinn — and will be printed in Lucerne. The dummy elicited gasps of disinterested delight when shown in the schoolroom. All involved, from Hideo Aoki the agent in Tokyo to Massimo Giacommeti the international packager who lives in Treviso are 'members of the Motovun Group of Publishers'.

It might be churlish to mutter 'where are the writers?' for indeed only one came to Motovun, Mark Verstockt, a Belgian, who has been waiting patiently for an English translation of his *The Genesis of Form* for many years. At these affairs writers, without whom we — the publishers — could not, after all exist, seem to be demanded only as items of promotion. But how many publishers are invited to international meetings of P.E.N? A whiff of conferential cross-pollination is overdue.

ON DAY ONE 59 publishers, a few journalists, including a top guy from *Der Stern* (and your own correspondent) and the aforesaid writer sat down faced by the Council, Ed Booher (in the chair), Bato Tomasevic, Jurgen Braunschweiger from Lucerne and John Clark, an American publisher become Florentine. New members were allowed four minutes of self-introduction, old ones two. Nobody objected to the Chinese overshooting; after all there are so many of them. I calculated (out loud) that if one in a million Chinese bought a copy of the sort of books published by the Motovun group, that would constitute a profitable sale.

The Chinese announced a conference of their publishers — all 160 of them — for December in Hong Kong. Pretty cool I thought.

A German from a new company held up a book on 'Bread' which had sold a million copies and wanted to sell the rights in his next offering on 'Baking'. The man from Tammi (Finland) said he had sold 25,000 copies in his tiny country of a book on 'Eve'. A German stood up and said he had nothing to say and nothing to sell but was sure he was going to enjoy himself. The man from Mitchell Beazley said he wasn't with Mitchell Beazley any more but had set up on his own.

This went down well. Motovun is a Book Fair 'as if people mattered' to quote E.F. Schumacher. Members are accepted as themselves, not as representatives, which must explain the presence of a young man from Mr Maxwell's book publishing company, MacDonalds.

There followed an hour-long exposition of the book trade distribution in Holland, assisted by charts and a television film in English of breathtaking banality and competence; as if an edition of *Panorama* had been given over to the drainage problem in Neasden. But Mr Schuyt was listened to with respect; he can order 1,000 copies of a book in English *and he pays*.

Telexes, computers and anxious yellow vans combine to make the Dutch book distribution so efficient that a title can be supplied in 24 hours. So booksellers don't need to carry stocks, which doesn't please publishers, who raise the cover price. (I was surprised to receive royalties from the Dutch edition of my own novel until I worked out that it cost the equivalent of £38 a throw.)

Mr Schuyt's most telling statistic was that, after all this, 40 per cent of the booksellers in Holland make no money and 16 per cent actually lose. Or so they say.

The afternoon was dedicated, after a tasting of perfectly palatable Slovenian wines, to 'working sessions' which could take place in the naturist colony of Vrasav, 15 miles away on the Tyrrhenian Sea. The phrase 'frank and open' applied to negotiations gains an extra quality when the parties are naked; it is impossible, in such a state, to exaggerate one's print orders.

After three days of elegiac hospitality in a Vergilian landscape — huge oxen, haystack-shaped haystacks and sunshine — one was not alone in thinking of Motovun as a place for a second home. A home there would cost a tenth of the price — there are no rates — and the natives are much more friendly than in, say, South Wales. □

AMONG YOU TAKING NOTES...

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Follower of fashion

Boyd Tonkin offers a brief history of fifty years of Penguins

BORN IN THE AFTERMATH of one depression, this year Penguin Books celebrate half-a-century of paperback publishing in the wake of another. Then, as now, the effects of recession were selective and unequal. When Allen Lane's ten sixpenny titles appeared on 30 July 1935, the pattern of increased consumer spending on leisure and recreation that was to sustain his imprint and its rivals was already visible, especially in the comfortable South and Midlands.

Soft-cover editions before Penguin had remained a shabby or eccentric sport on the fringes of serious, hardback publishing. Woolworth's had a 6d. Reader's Library, while one of the sleeker lists was actually called Albatross. Lane made paperbacks first respectable, then fashionable and finally dominant. But he did not set out to lead a revolution in consumption. One of his primary motives in launching the new series was to protect his august but ailing family firm, The Bodley Head, publishers of the *Yellow Book* in the 1890s and *Ulysses* in the 1930s.

An inspired bookseller, but never a missionary, Lane's opening list reflected the solid popular taste of a growing public he already knew, with Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* standing slightly apart from the standard fare of a Thirties' Boots or Smith's: Agatha Christie, Eric Linklater, Compton Mackenzie, Mary Webb. Innovation and radicalism were to come later, a response rather than an incitement to changing attitudes and the discovery of new readerships. The sharper, shriller company moulded since 1978 by American chief executive Peter Mayer — the Penguin of *Lace*, *The Far Pavilions* and *The F-Plan Diet* — probably has more in common with the founder's first intentions than some startled observers have realised.

Lane died in 1970, since when Penguin has formed part of the Pearson group, ultimate holding company of a vast and sometimes strange collection of interests that includes Goldcrest Films (of which Mayer is also a director), the *Financial Times*, Longman, Madame Tussaud's, Royal Doulton china and Château Latour. Penguin itself gained control in May of the International Thomson Organisation's book publishing arms — Michael Joseph, Hamish Hamilton and Sphere — but plan to preserve their separate lists. After a disastrous, loss-making end to the 1970s, Mayer's intensive promotion of mass-market titles, stronger overseas sales and an overall improvement in the British book trade have allowed Penguin to become predators rather than prey. Frederick Warne, holder of the Beatrix Potter copyrights, was acquired in 1983, a year of decisive revival in which Penguin's pre-tax profits surpassed £5 million, with Mayer's income reaching £235,000.

As profits have swollen, the prominence of the Penguin colophon has declined. The company now designs and promotes in ways that stress the character of a volume or a series, often at the expense of the familiar formats. 'A book is not a tin of beans', according to Allen Lane. Perhaps not; but current sales policy does sometimes suggest dogfood or detergents, with a dizzyingly eclectic spread of lists (from *Fighting Fantasy* to the new *Lives of Modern Women*), each aimed at a distinct section of a fragmented market, and many increasingly coy about their common origin.

Starting in September, the anniversary round of special editions and exhibitions coincides with a timely commercial revival. Given the pious memories that may cling to the name of Penguin in the minds of anyone who passed a bookish adolescence in Britain between the late 1930s and early 1970s, it might be helpful to recall that what is being commemorated is not a 'national institution' but one of the most consistently shrewd and resourceful operations in the history of publishing.

Publishers have never been philanthropists. How Penguin kept its unique and favoured status in the national culture for nearly 40 years remains more of a puzzle than some of its celebrants may admit. Only in the last 15 years or so have a clutch of other imprints, from Granada's Paladin to Fontana's Flamingo, managed to present themselves as alternatives and equals, not tackier imitations. Allen Lane certainly exploited his head-start, pushing Penguin at an early age out of the nursery of reprint publishing and into an ambitious commissioning policy. Penguin thrived on the commitment of its staff, some of whom achieved more for the cultural vitality of their public than a small army of academics and bureaucrats might have done: Tony Godwin, the expansionary editorial director of the Sixties and creator of the *Modern Classics*; Kaye Webb, editor of Puffins and one of the greatest — and most benign — influences on children's reading this century; designers such as Germano Facetti, their graphic or pictorial covers 'interpreting' books to prospective readers with wit and verve.

Following the wartime success of the radical Penguin *Specials* and John Lehmann's *Penguin New Writing* -- both with regular sales of 100,000 — the later growth of a huge backlist had created an archive without precedent or parallel. In its scope and depth, the Penguin range at its strongest was an indirect reflection of the post-war growth in educational provision at all levels. During the Seventies, funds dried and hope faded. The closure of Penguin Education in 1974 seems almost a warning symbol of the mood to come. Other disappearances followed (the African library; the Latin American library), while the backlist crumbled, with several of the illustrious dead (Woolf, Joyce, Hemingway) and some of the illustrious living, such as Angus Wilson, moving elsewhere.

In the Pearson era, Penguin's progress could no longer be read as a sort of unofficial chronicle of the welfare state's shifting ideologies. In retrospect, it seems as if only a cluster of historical coincidences ever gave the firm its oddly symptomatic niche in British taste and opinion. But while it lasted, this role was unmistakable. Pelicans began in 1937 with a list so internally coherent as to look like a manifesto of reason and reform. Virtually every saint in the Fabian calendar is there — Shaw, Wells, Cole, Julian Huxley — with the obligatory dose of Utopian science fiction and Whiggish social history. This phalanx of progressives embodies not today's publishing virtues of 'diversity' or 'pluralism', but a canny investment in rising intellectual stock made just before it crested.

This September, Penguin will issue another representative list, chosen to illustrate the range of their current activities. Its quality and variety is remarkable, and still could not be matched by any rival house: Iris Murdoch and Geoffrey Hill; Asa Briggs and Edward Said; Simon Callow and Nadine Gordimer. There's also a sign of recent times, if not of times to come: Martin Wiener's *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit*, a waspishly elegant Thatcherite attack on the principles of public service and state action that so many of Penguin's early readers cherished. □

Proceedings of the Experts' Conference on Soviet Jewry

Edited by Dr Lukasz Hirszowicz
Published by the Institute of Jewish Affairs
184 pp. £6.00/$10.00

An analysis of all aspects of the USSR's foreign and domestic policies, and the trends in its leadership and society that could influence Soviet attitudes towards the Jewish minority. Contributors include, among others, John A Armstrong on 'Soviet Nationalities' Policies'; Hélène Carrère d'Encausse 'The Islamic Minorities'; Richard Pipes 'Soviet Relations with the USA'; J E Spence 'Relations with Africa'; Amnon Sella 'The Fluctuating Influence of the USSR in the Middle East'; Alec Nove 'The Economic Dimension'; Jeremy R Azrael 'Trends in Soviet Society'; Shmuel Ettinger 'The "Jewish Question" in the USSR'.

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PHOTOGRAPHY

What surfaces have to say

Peter Dormer

Diane Arbus: Interior in Levittown

THE RECENT EXHIBITION of *American Photography 1945-1980* at the Barbican (a book of the photographs is published by Penguin) gave this entry in its chronology: '1949, Suburbia begins when Levitt and Sons turns 1,500 acres into Levittown — 17,500 identical houses.' American photographer Diane Arbus photographed an interior of one of these houses. Her photograph captures what is anti-aesthetic and dispiriting in low-budget consumer society. The feel of the room is portrayed, the lampshade's shiny polythene covering, the synthetic pile of the carpet, the smooth mirror-like surfaces of the wood table and TV cabinet. Here — we are in 1963 — modernity means no decoration except neurotic, simple pattern and antiseptic order. Look at the design of the clock and the Christmas tree lopped off at the top to get it to fit. That Christmas tree also reveals the mean proportions of the room by drawing attention to the low ceiling. Arbus has shown us a room that speaks volumes.

Photography attends to the surface of things and this fact has been used as a criticism of it. There seems to have been an intellectual orthodoxy in all manner of disciplines from art and architecture to politics that 'truth' is always hidden below surface. But often, and more often than, for example, painters of portraits or star-struck lovers or revolutionary comrades will admit, the only portrayable or discoverable 'truth' about people as well as objects is on the surface.

The picture by Arbus of 'Lady Bartender at Home with Souvenir Dog' (see p.36) works because of all the defining clues: once again everything is synthetic or heavily worked over. The hair, the make up, the fingernails — sculptured, manicured, synthetic and the clothes some version of nylon. The floor tiles are rubber, the little table is gilded metal, the poodle is stuffed and artificially furred. My inference is not just that she is working class, part of the 'decently hard working minority', but also that we can read her conformity. We see the style of the period but she cannot afford the real thing, only copies. There is no innovation, nothing here that points to her own individuality, only a conformity to someone else's — the fashion, style, TV industry's taste. All my remarks may be off the mark except this: this is a woman without power and with too much credulity. How do I know? Because no one with power and the wariness that comes with it would have let 'himself' be set up this way.

Nonetheless, the photographer seems to have less freedom of movement than a painter to make up new compositions and new imagery. But perhaps the painter's freedom is illusory — limited because few people will understand what the painter's invented imagery means. Once, when painting was a craft, painters concentrated on defining their subject matter through the precise attention to the surface of things, they made meanings out of compositions of recognisable objects and people apparently understood them.

But the photographer becomes truly eloquent through the craft of montage. The montagist can assemble 'statements' out of the real world to make forceful new but recognisable images. As Aron Scharf says in his book *Art and Photography*, 'The power of photomontage to provoke the most severe reactions lies in precisely its faculty to make the absurd appear true and the true appear absurd.'

Peter Kennard is well known for his montages and an early one for *Camerawork* magazine combines pictures of a heavy-duty tape recorder and a hand gripping the handpiece of a telephone set which is connected to the tape machine by a cord of barbed wire. We are not put off by the actual absurdity of the composite object because the reality of the parts make it acceptable. In such a montage Kennard has taken three images, put them together and made a fourth. This fourth image gives us a meaning, an idea is revealed to us about the relationship between the state and private individuality, between national security and personal freedom. Such montages depend on the viewer's ability to draw the right inferences but that applies to all pictures. Kennard has recently published a collection of photomontage posters (Greater London Council, price £3.50 the pack) arguing the effects of nuclear war on London. Each montage has a supporting text of facts taken from expert sources.

The 'montage' element or rather the strategy of making a new idea, creating a meaning, by the assembly of recognisable objects, is an old strategy. It can be seen at work in paintings such as that of 'The Ambassadors' (in the National Gallery) by Hans Holbein the Younger which shows two richly adorned men in a room in which there is a variety of objects such as a globe, a book of arithmetic, a hymn book and a collection of scientific artefacts too. John Berger gives a long survey of this picture in his book *Ways of Seeing* but in essence he says that the scientific instruments were used for navigation, navigation made empire and slave-trading possible. Colonisation went best by converting people to Christianity and Accounting and thus it proves 'that European civilisation was the most advanced in the world'. And in this same painting we see in the foreground a slanting oval shape — a skull which reveals itself as a skull only if you look at the painting from the side. This reminder of mortality which requires an oblique look to discover it renders temporary and uncertain all the material ambitions summed up in the painting. Holbein, if you will, presents us with a beautifully crafted Peter Kennard.

Earlier this year another collection of war photographs, *Images of War*, was published by the New English Library. The text is particularly intriguing about the high tech and high adrenalin glamour of the war

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Lady Bartender at Home with Souvenir Dog

photographer — a Hiltonesque expense-account living punctuated by vicarious hell-raising in the battle zones. But few of the war pictures are eloquent, there is no time to find the compositions to create the new meaning out of the familiar objects. There are exceptions, including a bizarre photograph of Raquel Welch on an American aircraft carrier, Vietnam 1966. And there is a Don McCullin picture, 'Vietnam. 1968. Memories', depicting a dead Vietnamese, his hands looking as though they have just dropped his open wallet which has spilled out its family photographs and which is next to an open bag of bullets: all this probably re-arranged and composed for the photograph which works on the 'montage' principle and is highly effective. The book's photographs were taken for the public domain of newspapers and magazines but who buys them when packaged into an art book? And why? □

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THEATRE

Lift-off

Benedict Nightingale

Thief of Souls
Shaw
Dirty Work & Gangsters
MAISHE MAPONYA *Lyric, Hammersmith*
California Dog Fight
MARK LEE *Bush*
Mutiny!
DAVID ESSEX & RICHARD CRANE *Piccadilly*

LIFT, as the London International Festival of Theatre calls itself for short, undeniably achieved lift-off at the Shaw last week. Not that I expected anything especially buoyant when the curtain rose on La Gaia Scienza's **Thief of Souls**, to show a lot of dumb Italians in cloth caps prancing and undulating and desultorily jitterbugging in front of a vaguely industrial landscape. It looked as if we were in for an evening of the sort of performance art that I, for one, find pretty resistible: no tale, no shape, no moral or social significance, nothing to appeal to my irredeemably rectilinear tastes.

But gradually the company's collective imagination accelerated from an amble to a trot to a sprint and, before we realised it, was in the air and flying. The ordinary became the extraordinary and the extraordinary became unique. A vast blubbery face replaced the backcloth, and performers peered out first from one of its bulging red eyes, then from its twisted mouth. Then that disappeared too, revealing what seemed to be a cross between a giant doll's house and a set for *Celebrity Squares*, slotted into a piazza that might have been jointly free-associated by de Chirico and Magritte.

The same collaborators could have been responsible for some of the human architecture, too. Out of one performer's back there sprouted a palm tree, out of another's a clock. One became a mass of porcupine quills, another a gruesomely obese Michelin Man, ponderously bopping to the sound of rock 'n' roll. Meanwhile, those more plainly dressed cavorted in increasingly athletic ways. They danced on the stairs, they slithered down weirdly sloping passageways, they clambered down from ceilings or fell through them, they swayed on the rooftops, then dangled from them, only their elastic reins preventing bust skulls or spines. Suddenly a man strolled upside-down along the flies, suddenly a woman unfurled a huge bedspread and it rolled down the side of the doll's house, an androgynous performer bunched and hanging from the middle of it.

So the show went on, palpably hardening its hold on the audience and disarming those of its members inclined to ask earnest, rational questions, like what it all meant. You might, I suppose, say that partly it was parodying the rituals of apartment life, partly dramatising the clandestine fantasies and unacknowledged impulses inside the brainboxes of the petit-bourgeois; but that hardly explains the title, let alone the exuberantly assured inventiveness of the evening as a whole. In any case, it seems a rather pedantic approach to an event that so enjoyably reminds us of one of the most important and least often remembered functions of the theatre: to excite wonder.

Unluckily, Gaia Scienza ends its stint at the Shaw on Saturday, so its special brand of wonder is on offer for another two days only. But the other major happening of LIFT's first week moves to the Albany Empire on Wednesday, allowing those who miss it at the Lyric to catch what's as timely and topical a double-bill as any theatrical festival could hope to import. The very moment South Africa pushes its panic-buttons, here's the Bahumutsi Theatre Company of Johannesberg, taking us inside two sorts and styles of headquarters: the one in which the political police grill and torture black suspects, the one that sits on the shoulders of a particular security man and calls itself a brain.

Dirty Work, as the latter trip is titled, is the funnier, consisting as it does of a meandering and increasingly mad lecture about where to buy locks that exude poison gas, how to ensure that body-searches are humiliating, whether it would be wise to divide the population into 100 different categories with 100 different uniforms and how to stop terrorists planting subversive thoughts in the minds of innocent blacks. It's a bit long-winded, but it ends pointedly enough, with the bug-eyed speaker, his dread of revolution and invasion come true at last, crouched with a machine-gun behind sandbags to the noise of explosions offstage. **Gangsters**

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is a more astringent piece, in both style and content. This time, we get a look at the victim of official paranoia, a black poet, fake-chummily warned, then banned, then incarcerated, beaten and killed for continuing publicly to mourn his people's predicament. Maishe Maponya, who himself brings a memorably gnarled face and spirit to the main part, uses a programme-note to acknowledge his debt to Beckett's play about political prisoners, *Catastrophe*; but the outrage and grief he communicates is all his own. Interestingly, its main object is less the white police chief who offhandedly organises atrocities and then leaves the room, more the black lackey he bribes and insidiously browbeats to put them into practice. If you want to understand why informers and collaborators have emerged in and around Soweto, and just what their compeers feel about them, you should certainly see **Gangsters.**

Briefly, **California Dog Fight** is strongest when its American author is content to evoke the event its title promises, weakest when he uses it to preach about man's abuse of women and other more general matters. But always it's expertly performed. And **Mutiny!** is strongest when Frank Finlay's stylishly bloody-minded Bligh is charismatically presiding over William Dudley's splendidly realistic Bounty, which swings and lurches and seethes and palpitates and does just about everything except what one increasingly hopes: sink and drown most of the cast. That's because of the show's weaknesses, notably David Essex's music, which is monotonous and gets in the way of momentum and the development of character, and David Essex's performance of Fletcher Christian — though who can blame him for being so serenely priggish when he must sing lines like (to Bligh, of all people) 'every dream you dream, I try to materialise the vision within your eyes'? Rarely have my yawn-glands been under more deadly assault. □

ART

Cornish cricket

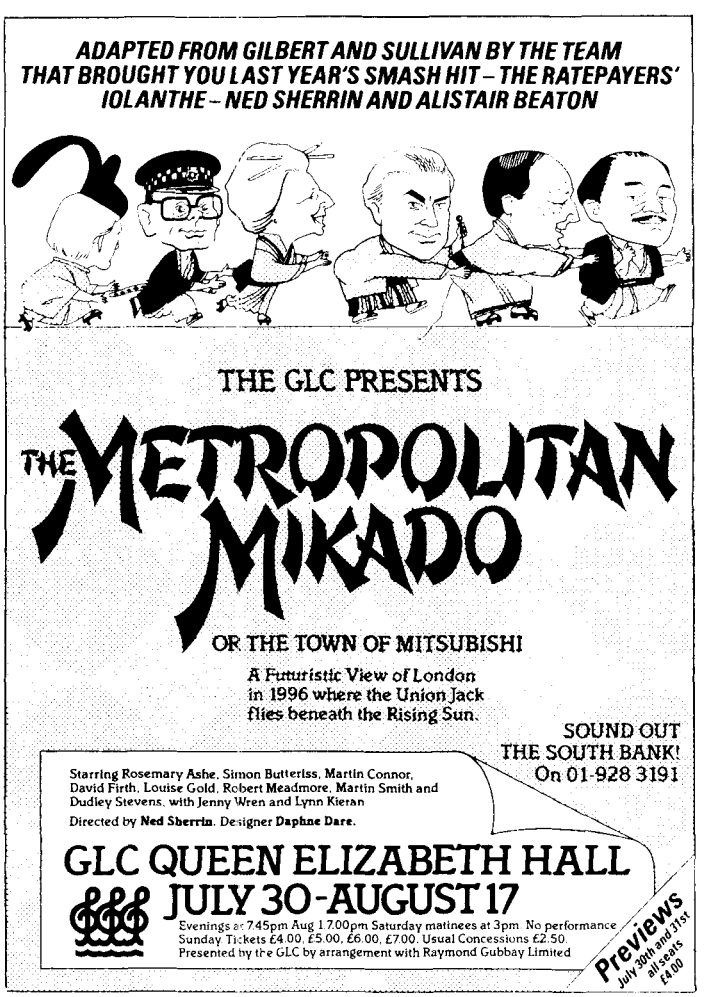
John Spurling

Painting in Newlyn 1880-1930
Patrick Heron *Both at Barbican until 1 September then 'Newlyn' only at Birmingham until 10 November*

A FEW YEARS BEFORE he died at the age of 90, Stanhope Forbes, the doyen of the Newlyn School, recalled that 'there was at one time, I regret to say, a rather bitter rivalry between the painters of Newlyn and the neighbouring colony of St Ives. Oh, it was nothing to do with painting, or art of any kind; it was much more serious, for it concerned cricket.' He was speaking at a time when the heyday of the Newlyn School had passed and that of St Ives was just beginning, for the two Cornish fishing-ports were never really artistic rivals. Whereas the St Ives School, mainly concerned with landscape and still life and predominantly abstract, flourished after the Second War, the Newlyn School specialised in *genre* paintings and was essentially a British prolongation into the 20th century of the more conservative strands of post-Impressionism. Both schools derived their ideas from France, but the Newlyners set no store by innovation and the height of their ambition was to have a success at the Royal Academy.

The Barbican's exhibition — neatly timed to follow the St Ives exhibition at the Tate earlier this year — is a conflation of two exhibitions from the Newlyn Orion Gallery, covering the two main generations of Newlyn painters. The catalogue, by Caroline Fox and Francis Greenacre, is an expansion and reworking of the catalogue for the 1979 exhibition and is in some ways the most interesting part of the show: very few of the 180-odd paintings stand out as remarkable in themselves, but the story of Newlyn as a centre for artists and the individual biographies of the artists are constantly fascinating. There is the material for a fat novel or a 13-episode TV serial here, with the paintings as illustrations of or, occasionally, incidents in the plot.

Most of the characters seem to have been of middle-class origin and only two — Harold Harvey and his wife Gertrude — were of Cornish extraction, though the first generation at least settled down surprisingly easily into the local community and even persuaded some of them to act as models. Those, of course, such as Henry Scott Tuke or Laura Knight, who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Stanhope Forbes: A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach

wanted to paint nudes out of doors, had to import models from London, but since the subjects were so often local — fishermen, their wives and children quietly engaged in their ordinary pursuits or occasionally facing the aftermath of a sea-disaster — the artists gave in their role of recorders as good as they got in their role of outside onlookers. Some may sneer at their slightly sentimental brand of realism, but I fancy that dramatic paintings such as Frank Bramley's *The Hopeless Dawn* and Walter Langley's *Disaster* or slice of life scenes such as Stanhope Forbes's *A Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach* and Harvey's *The Pedlar* come as near to the truth of 19th-century Newlyn as any art could hope to.

It is when the art becomes more separated from the locality, when, with the second generation of visitors, the subjects grow more generalised and touristic, that it begins to look jaded. Some of the later painters — Laura and Harold Knight, Dod and Ernest Procter, Alfred Munnings — were as talented as the earlier ones and certainly more sophisticated, but their genuine delight in their new surroundings ('At that time the very bright of life beamed on us', wrote Laura Knight) was too vague and insubstantial a subject to triumph over the unadventurousness of their techniques and their best work had no particular link with Newlyn. Even Harold Harvey, the native Cornishman, developed under the influence of the Knights and Procters away from his original *genre* style to a series of middle-class female figures and interiors painted during the Twenties, which are among the most striking things in the later part of the exhibition. Newlyn had ceased to be an inspiration in itself and become simply a seaside resort fashionable with artists.

Downstairs at the same address is a distinguished surviving member of the St Ives team. Patrick Heron's masters were Braque, Bonnard, Matisse and Picasso and his early works are impressively well digested adaptations of their methods to his more simple decorative and domestic purposes. De Staël first converted him to abstraction and he became a vehement and missionary colourist. His exhibition, like the one upstairs, is accompanied by a full and eloquent catalogue which claims more for the huge later canvases than I have ever been able to find in them, but the most recent works, inspired by his garden on the cliff above Zennor, have at last broken with the perpetually glaring colours and repetitive shapes of the Seventies, if not entirely with their overweening size. Given the strength of his early work — which this retrospective makes especially clear — and these signs of renewed energy, it is too early yet to say that St Ives has drawn stumps. □

Situations

Robert Sheppard

Windows steam up, beads
of condensation running
to strip the morning into ribbons —
just enough room to see the woman
at the corner of Wood Road
waving goodbye to her child as he
runs teetering on the ice
with miniature tip-toe steps
from one bright band
to the next. He demands
his mother's level gaze
to steady his way; but is still
lost in the sweat of
the room, lost to the eye,
turning to make sure she is
still waving when his back is turned.

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FILMS

Silvered

John Coleman

The Purple Rose of Cairo (PG)
Classics, Haymarket and Oxford Street; Screen on the Green; Gate, Bloomsbury; Odeon, Kensington

GOD KNOWS there is little enough humour around these days and so, thankfully, does Woody Allen. He makes an extremely funny movie. Not to complicate matters unduly, **The Purple Rose of Cairo** is both the title of his latest film and the black-and-white Thirties job it does terrible, magical things with.

Depression seems to be the name of the game for New Jersey brutalised housewife Cecilia (Mia Farrow, inspired casting as Missus Vulnerability) who frequents her local moviedrome seeing and re-seeing an occasion of considerable idiocy about a smart-set mob who cotton on to a poet-explorer during an Egyptian outing. This far-fetched Tom Baxter (Jeff Daniels) then walks out of the screen at her — a Buster Keaton trick reversed — and genially turns cinema upside down.

What ensues is not short of brilliant. The toing and froing — between black-and-white spitfire comedy (when they knew how to write quickie lines) and the coloured slowed-down, sicker stuff of today — leaves Cecilia and her descended star . . . well, where does it leave them? At a sad distance, for all that this is a comedy. Mr Allen has tied his people finely into a painful plot of film-fanaticism (that is what this event is surely about) and generated from it a huge joke — and a deathly irony. □

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

A Private Function Blissful and British double first as Michael Mowbray steers top-notch cast through puncturingly word-perfect Alan Bennett comedy set in 1947 Yorkshire. Nagged by social-climbing wife, meek chiropodist gets revenge on local unworthies by stealing black-market pig. (Maggie Smith, Michael Palin).

Birdy Eloquent images, inspired technique, skin-tight performances give brave lift-off to allegory-flecked adventures in blue-collar Philly of ornithological obsessive (Matthew Modine) and butch buddy (Nicolas Cage), later traumatised by Vietnam. Alan Parker's most sympathetic venture since *Bugsy*.

Witness Australian director Peter Weir in fine-tuned control of offbeat US thriller. Rugged but honest city policeman (Harrison Ford), grudgingly harboured from bent colleagues by time-warp Amish farmers, shares unconsummated love with Kelly McGillis's superb widow until the inevitable, estranging shoot-out.

Nick Duffy

Given excess of it

Christopher Priest

THE WAITRESS shouted at me, '*What*?'

It was the third attempt at making myself heard. I yelled, 'I asked you if you would turn the music down, please!'

'But the customers like it loud.'

There was one other couple in the restaurant, a few tables away from us. They were leaning towards each other across the table, apparently engaged in intimate exchanges. . .except that they both had their hands cupped around their ears. The veins in their necks were bulging with the strain of trying to hold a private conversation.

'Have you asked them?' I shouted.

'*What*?'

In the end she went to the record player and, with a resentful look in our direction, turned down the volume from the threshold of pain to the merely deafening. A few minutes later, when she thought we wouldn't notice, she turned it up again.

It's a true story: the restaurant was a real one, it was in London's Camden High Street, the food was excellent, the prices were reasonable, and the music was a pain in the neck. If there had been no music I would have taken my custom there regularly. No one can go there now: the place closed down several months ago. Clearly, the customers didn't like it so loud after all.

Because we have learned to live with terrorism, unemployment and the threat of nuclear war, we have all developed an acquiescent frame of mind about lesser forms of evil. We put up with minor things we don't like, because it never seems to occur to us to do otherwise.

Uninvited music is the curse of modern urban life and we all connive in it by pretending to ignore it. It comes at us from every direction. Whichever form it takes, the aggressive blast from one of those portable stereo tape players or the meek and tinny tinkle of Walkman headphones from the person next to you on a train, uninvited music has one common quality.

It is meant to be heard and noticed, but *not to be listened to*.

Restaurants are a case in point. At one time — in days which now seem almost virginal in their relative innocence — the principal assault was from muzak: the vaguely romantic meanderings of strings and piano, Mantovani favourites, Semprini serenades. A subliminal irritant, muzak was responsible for that unpleasant sensation of claustrophobia after an hour or so, a distinct wish to be elsewhere. But at least muzak was generally *quiet*.

Now it seems that every restaurant that isn't self-consciously 'exclusive' — in other words, the sort of place where ordinary mortals go to eat on their evenings out — cannot function without shattering its customers' eardrums

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with unidentifiable pop music. Several places I know progressively dim their lights as the decibels mount. . .a patent attempt to create a racy 'atmosphere'.

Why do they *do* it to us? We go to restaurants to eat the food and enjoy each other's company. We do not go there to experience someone else's idea of atmosphere, and we emphatically do not go to listen to pop music. People like to talk in restaurants; bellowing while you eat induces indigestion and bad temper, two symptoms unconducive to the enjoyment of food or company.

In one place (Richmond, Surrey) where two requests for moderation had had no effect, I finally asked the manager why the music was so loud. 'So the customers can talk privately,' he said, and backed away. I glanced around: the tables were crammed together, any hope of privacy a patent nonsense. Customers bawled at each other, or sat in defeated silence.

The truth is that the music is played for one reason only: the staff put it on for *their* amusement, not ours. Watch their faces as they (sometimes) grudgingly obey your request. You have been spotted: you are an old square, like the neighbour who bangs unreasonably on the connecting wall at midnight.

A walk down Oxford Street, or any other major shopping street, will reveal that uninvited music is not confined to restaurants. Clothes shops and hairdressers — to identify the principal offenders — seem to compete to create the loudest, most exasperating blare of noise as you pass. Are we supposed to think there is a *party* going on inside?

And buskers! Once there was a time when buskers were likeable, chummy adornments to a day in town. Now they too have entered the decibel stakes. And as the volume has increased, so has the incidence of aggressive and basilisk stares.

In the past year or so more and more of these people have been turning up in the Tube stations with portable amplifiers. The most recent development is the musician who brings a pre-recorded backing track, then stands surrounded by tape recorder and stereo speakers, wailing away on his saxophone/violin/electric guitar.

Last week I heard a Mozart quintet echoing shrilly around the tiled tunnels of Tottenham Court Road. . .and, after a long walk, passed a sullen violinist with an array of sophisticated playback equipment.

No one stops to listen; they are not intended to. Uninvited music has no function except as a form of assault. You are supposed to be aware of it as a presence, but not to respond to it as an aesthetic experience. Because music is widely regarded as one of life's civilising, humanising diversions, no objection is tacitly permissible, except on the petty grounds of individual taste.

Yet taste never has a chance; there is no choice or selection involved. . .the racket comes at you whether you want it or not. You can try to ignore it, you can go through the fruitless routines of polite request or complaint, or you can hurry past with what you hope is a withering glare.

But I doubt you'll ever stop it. Maybe this is why so many people take refuge inside the headphones of a Walkman. . . . □

Naseem Khan
In his images

WHY do people spend ages watching building sites? Is it because — perish the thought — they secretly hope the crane will drop a load on top of the tiny waving foreman? Or is it for the more laudable reason that watching a process is always fascinating?

Both groups of people would have found something to satisfy them when David Hockney went on public display recently at Bradford's National Museum of Photography. The painter — a much-loved son of Bradford — had volunteered to spend three days shooting pictures for and then assembling — partly in public — one of his celebrated 'joiners'. These, readers may know, are collages made up of photographs taken from not one but several different points of a subject — from Hockney's own desk to the Grand Canyon — thus introducing the elements of time and movement into a traditionally static, timeless image. The theory beneath the practice represents a declaration of war on the single fixed-viewpoint perspective, ruler for some 350 years. It is also drawing Hockney to a different concept of the relationship between artist and subject, which we'll come to later.

Meanwhile it is early morning on the second day. If you were out in the city centre you might have seen him: not a particularly bizarre figure (beige mac and trousers, snow-white cap, owlish granny specs), but pinpointed by the number of people following him around photographing Hockney photographing Bradford in a way that makes you think of decreasing mirror-images. Is this, one wonders, the most monstrous ego trip? What can come out of it? Will the crane drop down on the foreman?

Back in the Education Room of the museum an hour or so later, the cameras are still clicking as Hockney ponders the mass of colour prints scattered at his feet. On one side is a pile of books about Braque. (Hockney believes his discoveries through the joiners relate to the Cubists.) A picture has started to grow on the large white boards — the Bradford townscape, those old familiar places that fill up the tourist images, but not quite the same. Queen Victoria rears up on her statue; the Museum of Photography's white modern mass billows out behind. Grass and neat civic flora reach out to one side. A jigsaw? Not quite. The components for the pictures taken at different times from different viewpoints put together produce the beginnings of a rhythm. Hockney layers the prints down thoughtfully, tipping some, bisecting others, extending some.

Time draws on, and it is time for the public — in successive batches of 25 — to be admitted. It's not a good time; Hockney has gone as far as he can go with current prints. Where's the next lot shot that morning? Where are the duplicate prints — he uses, incidentally, a simple Nikon automatic taking 35mm colour negatives — he needs to start sellotaping down a final, not working, version? The crowds mill in. They stand round the boards, waiting expectantly. Hockney, his hands in his pockets, stands in the narrow gap between boards and side cupboard looking a trifle glum. It is not the first time an artist has been let down by the technicians. It takes some time for the audience itself to gather courage. The younger ones — who are less reverential — fare better. A young man accuses Hockney of still adhering to the simple old rectangle, the picture's 'hidden construction'. No, he answers mildly in his flat, Yorkshire voice, 'though I've nothing against rectangles. It's just edges I want to soften.' How did the same-seeming grass get assembled? He had moved across it methodically, he explained, shooting as he went. The total reflected that experience of movement. The steps also were a result of progression, photographed from different points, different times and in different light. The thing was, he went on lighting yet another cigarette, how to join these different stages and still make them coherent pictorially: 'Chaos you tend to move away from a bit.'

I expected all that busyness and talk to be still going on when I got back an hour later. But it had all changed. The room had been cleared, and was totally silent. The boards of prints had moved from the edge into the centre of the room. Hockney, hat now off, was squatting down working. The few people there sat round the work on the floor. The cameras were silent and you could have heard a pin drop.

The picture itself took your breath away it had changed so much. Victoria had changed from being the dominant point to a pivot. Running left from her statue swirled a broad dramatic set of steps, bronzey-bluey — part wet, part sun-stained, exuberant and busy. Throughout the breadth of the picture you had a similar sense of ambiguity, slight changes of focus and scale that drew you in or pushed you back, differing points of attention that in fact echo the way in which one's attention ebbs and flows during normal life. A living breathing landscape, it suddenly made the official 'Bradford — a Surprising Place' poster of the same view oddly, eerily unreal. It's not over yet. There's more shooting, some rethinking and more sticking down. It's not till the next day that Hockney finally stands back, gives a thumbs up and announces flatly, 'That's it.'

The implications of the joiner method came at the end of Hockney's packed lecture which took his published views on photography a step further — into moral dimensions. The joiners put the artist firmly into his or her picture, removing the sense of a vanishing point and a distant, untouchable infinity. 'If we looked at the world a different way and actually put ourselves in it, we might see it's a very enchanting place . . . All our images *exclude* us — that's why we might blow ourselves up.' A humane and optimistic statement that Hockney will no doubt continue developing, it was of a piece with his generosity over the past three days. A free gift of both picture and time to the Museum of Photography, it opened up for the public the processes of a work in progress; giving them the artist as an active worker, not an invisible magician behind the scenes. □

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TELEVISION

Andrew Rissik
Trickery

ORSON WELLES once pointed out that good art is much like good conjuring: it depends on counterfeit, illusion and sleight of hand. And, somewhat earlier, Diderot argued that acting was built on a similar paradox. In the theatre, spontaneity and emotion are extremely carefully rehearsed. For years professional magicians have refused to divulge their secrets — to this day no one knows how Houdini made his elephant disappear — but, from time to time, the creative talents working in the collaborative media of film or television like to afford their audiences the sly pleasure of glimpsing the creaky apparatus behind those apparently effortless effects.

This week, in Stewart Parker's **Radio Pictures** (BBC-2), considerable comic mileage was derived from the visual absurdities that are so much a part of producing drama on sound. And ITV's **The Making of a Model** made us smile as we watched a novice calendar girl being sent from Birmingham to Bali only to discover, with rueful nonchalance, that glamorous pictures are most emphatically not the product of glamorous working conditions. Both programmes contained some glorious moments. In *Radio Pictures* a sleepy old ham was asked to do his bit for radio drama by cooing pigeon noises into the mike while an impassive props man stood beside him listlessly flapping an umbrella. In Bali, after frustrating days of hanging about, sane-minded and funny Kim Vaughan gazed longingly at an oil lamp until the fumes got to her and, shedding her soft-porn decorum, she vomited into the grass.

But the apparatus of radio production was, in all honesty, the only thing that distinguished *Radio Pictures*. Much of BBC-2's Summer Season has been dismayingly poor. Again and again, pedestrian scripts have been made unimaginatively on video tape, still often a lame stand-in for film. Some weeks back *Glamour Night* struck several of my friends as voyeuristic and offensive. But I would defend this play — a short, neat piece about male amateur photographers getting a woman to pose for them — as a potentially worthwhile attempt to reveal the fear and stupidity that lies behind so much stereotypical chauvinism. But, while criticising pornography, the play seemed also to indulge it, and the effect was unwittingly ambiguous.

I could find no such excuse for Terry Johnson's **Time Troubles** (BBC-2) which struck me as a mere ragbag of chic liberal clichés. A Russian Grand Master, shadowed by a bevy of B-movie hoods, is outmanoeuvred by a precocious 11-year-old, himself egged on by a working-class father, whose divorced, lesbian wife returns, at the worst possible moment, to claim her children. There was an intriguing pattern of relationships here, but Johnson's dialogue consisted almost exclusively of simplistic psychological commonplaces. When the play ended in the familiar white-out of Armageddon, I retired to bed feeling angry and cheated. It is the challenge of drama to show us not only what people do and say, but to depict also what they think believe and imagine. Derek Jarman recently attacked the theatrical mainstream of British film for failing to be 'a cinema of mind and soul'. I would level much the same charge at most contemporary television drama. Douglas Livingstone's superlative Sunday night film, *We'll Support You Ever More* (BBC-1), is, sadly, the exception these days.

In the end, *Radio Pictures* fell victim to its own journalistic comedy. Sniggeringly alert to the mannered artifice of the studio, it was, nevertheless, in its own way, just as arch and preposterous as the medium it claimed to satirise. In *Hill Street Blues* (currently enjoying a Channel Four repeat) the control room technicians would have sounded like technicians: laid back, quiet, talking in broken sentences and non sequiturs, routinely doing a job. This lot delivered their lines in quotation marks, just like the actors they were sending up and Parker's off-mike script was even more brittle, psychologically predictable and pretentious than the leaden verbiage his characters were recording. 'Some of our past is imagined and some of our future is memorised,' said Parker's diffident, bearded author to his vampish leading lady. 'It's like an ember that we carry with us. Casting a little light and warmth forward and back in the middle of cosmic darkness.' 'Is that the best you can say, Mr Playwright?' snarled Frances Tomelty before doing a stagey walkout. Peter Shaffer would have loved it.

The lesson of *The Making of a Model* was that, compared to journalistic drama and the tendency of its authors to invent banal emotional patterns in order to dignify plain observation, actual journalism, in the form of the documentary, wins hands down. No dramatist except, perhaps, the mordant Alan Bleasdale could have written the seethingly envious little monologue offered as advice to Kim Vaughan by a piqued and less fortunate colleague. Narrated with dry expertise by Michael Parkinson, and continually enlivened by Kim's bubbly, Julie Walters-like character, this was sharper and more touching than any playwright's contrivance.

But **We'll Support You Ever More** did much to redress the balance. John Thaw played the father of a murdered soldier, going to Ulster to seek the truth of his son's death. Confronted at every turn by plausible but contradictory half-lies, he found himself lost in that state of moral bafflement which political reality so often casts upon an open and idealistic imagination. Directed with sober lack of sentimentality by its author, this film was the most mature and subtle piece of drama since Central's stunning *The Last Place on Earth.*

Having criticised **Saturday Review** (BBC-2) elsewhere last year, I must now do a *volte face* and applaud an excellent second season. The guest critics are younger, more iconoclastic and much tougher debaters than last year's batch and, hosted by Russell Davies (who looks suspiciously like Melvyn Bragg with a beard), the show has an authority which makes it a welcome alternative to the Sunday papers. □

Weekend competition

No 2883 **Set by Nell L. Wregible**

One of the best games played by the *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue* gang is called 'Missed Hits' — plays, films or novels which didn't quite make it. To nick some of their best — *Bed Knobs and Hoovers*, *Reasonable Expectations*, *Tuesday Bloody Tuesday*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Poorly*. Max. six shots each. By 7 August.

No 2880 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Limericks about living persons in the arts or politics.

Report **By Len the Unlucky**

Everyone else enjoying their summer hols. No space even to write a proper report. A distinct surfeit of 'Thatcher. . .match 'er. . .catch 'er'. Five pounds for each effort which struggled into the winners' enclosure.

Lord Gowrie enthuses — What hues!
What azurous sapphirine Blues!
But his garden's glory
Is nonetheless Tory,
And Grey stays the shade of his views.

WILL BELLENGER

Of course, I don't want to sound cynical,
To reach Downing Street is the pinnacle
Of Labour's ambition,
But in his condition,
I very much doubt whether Kinnock'll.

ALAN CLARK

'You Tories,' said Thatcher, 'must go
Through highways and byways and *crow*
To the dim-witted proles
That we're reaching our goals
When it ain't necessarily so.'

John Gummer reflected, 'How odd
That Maggie's not privatised God.
At her divine pleasure
I'm sure that the measure
Would go through the House on the nod.'

GERRY HAMILL

His work leaves us stirred and well-shaken,
For his vision is grim but — *mistaken?*
No, looked at afresh,
All too solid flesh
Has the texture of raw, streaky Bacon.

ANDREW MCEVOY

He's so preppy, Vice-President Bush,
With his prim, Calvin-Coolidge-like moosh,
That the playmate of Bonzo
Looks practically Gonzo
By contrast, when shove comes to push.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Said a minister called Sir Keith Joseph:
'I don't care if I tread on their toes if
The monetary line
Is kept pure and fine,
Though Philistine and, yes, explosive.'

T. GRIFFITHS

A young politician called Steel,
On being asked, 'How do you feel?'
Replied, 'I was fine,
With a pretty strong spine,
Till the Doctor insisted I kneel.'

NAOMI MARKS

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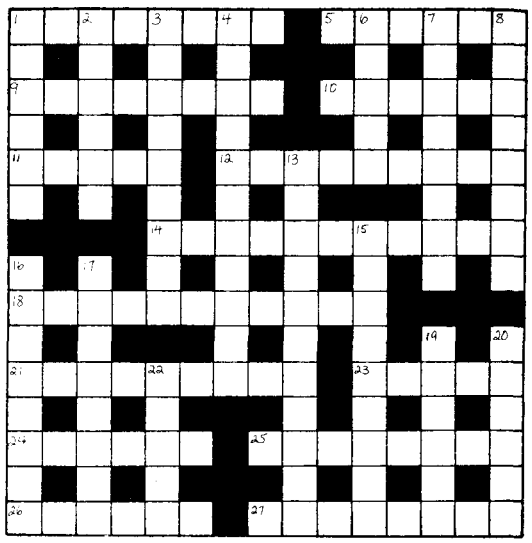
Weekend Crossword 1487

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1487, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 13 August.



Name _____

Address _____

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ACROSS

1. Tree made light by the wind (8)
5. Tongue or gum (6)
9. Agitated eaters with little credit for the providers of the food (8)
10. The job is not finished in which a man makes instruments (6)
11. Criminal in whose path I effectively stood (5)
12. One who studies the way has a bad dream about rape being widespread (9)
14. State to join before I run away (11)
18. Petitions enable a bird to enter lots of matches (5,6)
21. A place without merit turning into wormwood (9)
23. Raid although there is nothing in the conflict (5)
24. One of the feet is one morning taking a vehicle (6)
25. It is a breach of trust to live by the reverse of primitive work (8)
26. County vehicle (6)
27. Turned up and listened (8)

DOWN

1. Goddess who makes Tom an egghead (6)
2. Back afterwards about one to do the shopkeeper's job (6)
3. Evil is about to put on a new front for the impudent (9)
4. A crooked deal is short on promises to pay up, making for bitterness (11)
6. Glorify without head to lift up (5)
7. Still a man even if he loses the order (8)
8. Prevent having children to throw off a financial burden (8)
13. Foretell about the last word uttered in a difficult situation (11)
15. It goes on a mission and starts trying to plead for the church (4,9)
16. Agreements which show that the new rate is binding (8)
17. He comes into the shop and gets credit without us being given a book (8)
19. Without expression of agreement a man gets bad-tempered (6)
20. Cover for ball which may be batted (6)
22. Department which gives me experience (5)

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A WARM, attractive graduate woman, mid 40s, div., home-loving, seeks unattached, professional man for developing relationship. Interests: family life, music, countryside. I am secure financially, have a beautiful home and interesting career, but lack a close relationship with a man. London home. Box (26)1073.

YOUNG, TALL, slim man (35), seeks younger female, for evenings out in and days out of Birmingham. Box (30)1207.

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FAT, FORTY and face like the back of a bus. Still interested? This West Country school marm loves writing and receiving letters. Box (30)1233.

GAY GUY, slim, young 36, graduate, interests include: politics, travel, arts, seeks similar (24-40), for sincere relationship. Photo appreciated. Box (30)1211.

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL London man, 33, non-smoker, social drinker, sincere, slim, seeks affectionate female anywhere. I am Indian, you need not be. Box (29)1183.

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NORTH MANCHESTER professional man, divorced, slim, 45, solvent, own hair and teeth, seeks pleasant, 40ish woman for mutual support, conversation, candlelight, wine and who knows? Box (30)1224.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, tall, fit, 43, humorous, broad-minded, disappointed socialist, living in London, likes music, art, countryside etc., wishes to meet similar woman. Box (30)1204.

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In pursuit of the re-organisation of the Head Office of the Labour Party following the adoption of the Review Committee Report by the National Executive Committee, the Labour Party is seeking to appoint a Director of Campaigns and Communications. Knowledge of the Labour Party, press relations, journalism and print production processes is required.

The Director would be responsible for the management of staff and resources, budgetting, and setting of priorities in the campaigning and communications area. The Director would report to the General Secretary and appropriate Committees of the National Executive.

The Director would be responsible for all Party campaigns, publications, propaganda and publicity; press relations and public relations; radio and TV relations; political and psephological information, polling and tracking other parties; party political broadcasts; information service to the public; printing and design of Party materials; sales and marketing of Party materials; and distribution of Party materials.

For application forms and further details please apply to: Mr J. L. Whitty, General Secretary, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT (Tel. 01-703 0833).

Closing date for applications **15 AUGUST 1985.**

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer.

OPPORTUNITIES

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Short, or long-term duties anywhere in the EEC or overseas . . .urgently wanted by UK citizen.

Hands-on aptitudes include publicity, neighbourhood social work, sales, management liaison and major civil engineering projects in The Middle-East.

Questions, suggestions, ideas, franchises, comments and fellow-optimists. . .all welcome!

Please phone 'Mr. Bill' on (0908) 660742 . . .or write c/o 177, Beadlemead, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Bucks, England MK6 4HU.

POLITICAL PUBLICATIONS

Marxism Today

August issue — Out Now

Hywel Francis: *the breaking of the NUM*

Veronica Beechey: *The shape of the workforce to come*

Roger Owen: *Lebanon — Towards Pax Syriana?*

Also: **David Hockney — Nicaragua — Hijacking — Labour in Liverpool**

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

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Indiv £9 Instit £12	Indiv £16 Instit £20

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Cheques payable to Marxism Today ■ 16 St John St ■ London EC1M 4AY

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: s.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 28 July 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting. 'What Reincarnates?'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

HOLIDAYS/ TRAVEL

CYCLING HOLIDAYS. Late bookings still available for Ireland, London to Venice, and USA. Baggage carried, fully serviced tours. Full details from: Bike Events, P.O. Box 75, Bath, Avon. Tel. 0225 310859.

CHEAPEST FARES. Paris, Caracas, Port of Spain, Singapore, Sydney, Hong Kong, Jo'burg, Nairobi, Istanbul, anywhere. Fareplan, 60-66 Wardour Street, W1. 01-734 9772.

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KINGSTON, SURREY. Cottage, 4 beds + cot, near Thames & Royal Parks. Central London 20 mins. Available 27 July-Oct. £200 p.w. 01-720 4618.

LAKES. Self-catering. Share writer's remote farmhouse. Single/double rooms £33/£53 p.w. Discounts unwaged. 06576 612.

TRIED THE REST, now try the best. For low air fares to world-wide destinations inc. Africa. SHL, 313A Hoe St, London E17. 01-520 7911.

TUITION

GOOD PRESENTATION leads to quick promotion. James Taylor (RADA Dip.) offers private tuition in Voice Production — Delivery Technique and Posture. For details phone 01-904 0279.

GENERAL SERVICES

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THERAPY

MUSIC THERAPY, LGSM. 01-373 7968 (Answerphone). Individual sessions. No previous musical skill required.

LISTINGS

FRI 26 JULY

LONDON 'Deep Digs' — exhibition and sale of cartoons of the miners strike. All proceeds to Women against Pit closures. Daily until 29 July at Cartoon Gallery, 83 Lambs Conduit St, WC1.

SAT 27 JULY

MAIDSTONE Support the jailed miners. Join Medway Towns Support Grp. outside Maidstone Jail 12 noon to 2pm. Assemble County Hall, nr. Maidstone E. BR station 11.30am. **Details: Medway 811655.**

SUN 28 JULY

TUFNELL PARK Benefit concert for El Salvador 8pm-2pm The Boston Arms (opp. Tufnell Pk. tube). Adm. £2.50. Featuring: 'Tenpole Tudor', 'The Pharaos', 'Duvet Bros Video Scratch', Compere & Disco.

MON 29 JULY

TUFNELL PARK Benfit concert for Nicaragua 8pm-12pm The Boston Arms. Featuring John Hegley & Otiz Cannelloni, Faith Bros, Latin Quarter, Porky the Poet. Adm. £2.50.

LONDON 'Benefits under Threat' public meeting with Margaret Beckett MP & Angela Eagle. COHSE to discuss government green paper and Labour Party alternatives to means testing. 7.30pm Westbourne Rd. Community Centre, off Roman Way, N7. **Org. Islington S & Finsbury Labour Party Women's Section.**

TUES 30 JULY

LONDON An opportunity to meet Madhu Kishwar & Ruth Vanita and discuss 'Women's struggles in India'. 7.30pm S. London Women's Centre, 55 Acre La, SW2. (no wheelchair access). All women welcome. **Details: Sheila Shah 01-729 4575.**

WED 31 JULY

LONDON CROWD — Inaugural meeting of new campaign to defend right of assembly and dissent, formed in response to Government Public Order Law proposals. Spkrs. invited from TUs, Black, Irish, Gay, Lesbian & Women's Grps, Animal Rights, Peace Movement. 6.30pm Holborn Library, Theobald's Rd, WC1. **Details: CROWD, 38 Mount Pleasant, London, WC1V 0AP. 01-734 5831/833 2701.**

FRI 2 AUGUST

GREENWICH 'Hiroshima & Nagasaki' — Harvest of Nuclear War' film 8pm St. Mark's, South St. Adm. Free. **Details: Greenwich CND 01-691 4128.**

FORTHCOMING

6 AUG BLACKHEATH Hiroshima Day Children's Peace Picnic 5.30-8.30pm Boating Pond, nr. Prince of Wales Pub. Kite flying, making paper 'peace cranes'. 8.30pm Mayors and Council Leaders of Lewisham & Greenwich will float ceremonial candles on pond. **Details: Greenwich CND 01-691 4128.**

7 AUG STREATHAM 'The Enemy Within' public meeting on Civil Liberties 8.15pm Streatham Library with Nottingham Miners' Wife, Sacked Kent Miner, Greenham Women, Newham 7 Defence Campaign. Adm. Free. **Org. Streatham Action Grp.**

10 AUG HIGHGATE Gathering to commemorate Hiroshima Day. 2pm Cherry tree in Priory Park, Priory Rd, N8. (close Middle La. entrance) Spkrs. incl. Tim Piggott-Smith. **Org. Highgate CND.**

24-26 AUG AYLESHAM, Kent. Bank Holiday 'Mines not Missiles' Festival '85. **Details: Roger Gates, 28 Harcourt Drive, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8DP. 0227 459676.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

billboard

Theatre

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
01-628 8795/638 8891 24hr info 628 2295
BARBICAN THEATRE
RED NOSES by Peter Barnes "A superb new comedy" Gdn 26, 27 July, 9-12 Aug
LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST red. price previews 1-8 Aug "a treat" Times
THE PIT
THE DESERT AIR by Nicholas Wright 31 July-8 August

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'A Chorus of Disapproval'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'The Duchess of Malfi', 'Martine'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629. Tonight, tomorrow, Sun. 8pm.
BLOOMSBURY FESTIVAL — evenings of New Music. 30 July-3 Aug. 7.30pm CROYDON DANCE THEATRE in THE BLUEBIRD.

Poetry Competition

GREENWICH FESTIVAL POETRY COMPETITION
Prizes £500 £300 £150 £50
Adjudicators: Adrian Henri Grace Nichols
For details and entry forms send sae to:
K. Entecott, Greenwich Festival Poetry Competition,
25 Woolwich New Road, London SE18 6EU.
Closing date: 31 August 1985.

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APPOINTMENTS

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

PEACE PLEDGE UNION. Urgently require someone to develop networks for promotion of PPU campaigns and education work, arrange conferences, share in administration etc. Experience in the above and commitment to pacifism essential. Salary £6,000. Job description and application forms from: PPU, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1. Closing date: 16 August.

WANTED:

Committed and talented left amateur photographers for new Scottish socialist photo-library.

Further details from:

EXPOSURES, 2b Greendykes Road, Broxburn, West Lothian.
Phone enqs: 031-225 6625.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING
(ADMIN AND FINANCE)
Currently up to £15,720 pa.

Applications are invited for this second tier post which is one of three in a comprehensive Housing Department which has 22,000 dwellings under management and is in the process of decentralising housing services to 11 local offices.

The successful applicant will be responsible to the Director of Housing for the internal financial control of the Department, staffing matters, training, computer development and general administrative support. He/she will have line management responsibility for the operation of Housing Benefits and for the central financial and administrative sections of the Department.

The successful candidate will have the ability and experience to participate as a member of the Departmental Management Team, will hold a relevant professional qualfication and will preferably have Local Government or other Public Service experience.

The post carries a casual user car allowance. Consideration may be given to the provision of temporary housing accommodation in certain circumstances. Up to £1,750 may also be available towards resettlement expenses, together with actual cost of removals and temporary lodging allowances in approved cases.

Application form and further details available from the Personnel Manager, Civic Centre, Southampton, S09 4ZF. Tel: Southampton (0703) 832832. (Answerphone out of office hours quoting ref. FA04).

Closing date for receipt of completed application forms 14th August 1985.

Southampton CITY

Your application will be judged solely on its merits irrespective of race, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion or disability.

An equal opportunity employer

THE LABOUR PARTY REQUIRE A
DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATION

In pursuit of the re-organisation of the Head Office of the Labour Party as a result of the recent Review Committee Report agreed by the National Executive Committee, the Labour Party is seeking a Director of Organisation. Experience of Labour Party organisation and knowledge of Labour Party rules, procedures and policy is required.

The Director will be responsible for staff and resource management, budgetting, and setting the priorities for the organisation directorate. He or she would report direct to the General Secretary and appropriate committees of the Executive.

The Director would cover electoral organisation; by-elections; conferences; oversight and co-ordination of regional staff and regional offices; membership recruitment and servicing; training of organisers; conferences; liaison with trade unions, organisation of Women's Sections; Young Socialists and Labour Students; enforcement of rules, the Party's constitution, disputes adjudications and appeals; the directory of Party office holders, etc.

For application forms and further details please apply to: Mr J. L. Whitty, General Secretary, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. (Tel. 01-703 0833).

Closing date for applications **15 AUGUST 1985.**

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer.

THE LABOUR PARTY REQUIRE A
POLICY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

In pursuit of the re-organisation of the Head Office of the Labour Party following the adoption of the Review Committee Report by the National Executive Committee, the Labour Party is seeking to appoint a Policy Development Director.

Knowledge of development of Labour Party policy — domestic and international — and of Labour Party procedure, would be a major advantage.

The Director would be responsible for advice to National Executive Committees on Home Policy, Local Government, International Policy, and for Political Education and information, for specialist briefing to the Party and press, for the Party library and archives, and for liaison with the Parliamentary Labour Party and Shadow Cabinet on legislative activities and policy development. The Director would report to the General Secretary and appropriate committees of the National Executive.

For application forms and further details please apply to: Mr J. L. Whitty, General Secretary, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT (Tel. 01-703 0833).

Closing date for applications **15 AUGUST 1985.**

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BANKING, INSURANCE & FINANCE UNION

Appointment of
TRADE UNION ORGANISER

Applications are invited from persons of suitable qualifications and Trade Union background for the above post of Organiser.

Commencing salary £9,723 per annum on scale rising to £10,845 per annum.

The successful applicant will be based on the Union's Salisbury Office. Car provided. Good holiday and conditions of service.

For application form and job description please write to: John James, National Organiser, BIFU, 55 Charles Street, Cardiff CF1 4ED.

All application forms to be completed and returned not later than Thursday 22 August 1985.

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